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**course time:** Monday and Wednesday, 10:00am-10:50am

**classroom:** Scharbauer 1010

**lab times:** Wednesdays, 1:00pm-1:50pm; Fridays 9:00am-9:50am & 10:00am-10:50am

**lab room:** Scharbauer 4022

**e-mail:** michael.strausz@tcu.edu

**office hours:** Mondays, 1:00pm-2:00pm; Tuesdays, 1:00pm-3:00pm

**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 lab grade of zero for the week.
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. *i>clicker*: You are required to purchase an i>clicker remote for in-class participation. An i>clicker is a device that allows you to respond to questions I pose during class. In order to receive credit for your responses, you will need to register your i>clicker remote online by **Wednesday, January 21 at 10am**. You must have come to class at least once and voted on at least one question in order to complete this registration properly. Once you have voted on a question in my class, go to <http://www.iclicker.com/registration>. Complete the fields with your first name, last name, TCU student ID (from your TCU ID card), and remote ID. The remote ID is the series of numbers and sometimes letters found on the bottom of the back of your i>clicker remote. i>clickers will be used most days in class, and you are responsible for bringing your remote daily.
5. *Extra Credit*: If there are events at TCU or in the community that are related to this course, I may decide to grant extra credit to students who both attend and write a brief paper about the event. If I decide to make this kind of extra credit assignment, the specifics will be emailed out to all students enrolled in the class.
6. *TCU E-mail*: 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 three weeks ago" is not an acceptable excuse for failing to complete required course tasks.
7. *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 paper deadline is 10am on Monday and you submit your paper at 11am, you will automatically lose 10 points. Once grades have been officially submitted for the course, late assignments will no longer be accepted.
8. *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.
9. *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.
10. *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 consider using someone else's i>clicker to be an example of academic misconduct. 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:

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

First Exam (February 18): 15%

Second Exam (April 1): 15%

Comprehensive Final Exam (Monday, May 4, 8am-10:30am): 30%

i>clicker participation: 10%

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 started one week after the exam/assignment 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 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.

**i>clicker participation:** During most lectures I will ask a few questions which you will be required to answer using your i>clicker. It is your responsibility to purchase an i>clicker 2, register your i>clicker, and have enough battery power to use your i>clicker in class (it might be useful to keep backup batteries with your course materials). For each class where I ask i>clicker questions, you will receive a grade based on how many questions you answer. For the most part, you will receive full credit just for answering the questions, but occasionally you may get more points for getting the right answer (this will be noted on the question). I will drop your lowest grade, and average the rest of these i>clicker class grades together.

**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 university Official University Absences, properly documented illnesses, or properly documented personal/family emergencies.

**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.

Pollock, Philip H. 2011. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 4th ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Pollock, Philip H. 2011. *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 4th ed. Washington: CQ Press. (Please be sure that this workbook has the data CD, which should be stuck to the inside of the front cover).

An i>clicker 2 (Please be sure that you get an i>clicker 2, rather than an i>clicker +)

**Schedule:**

12-Jan	<i>Introduction</i> No assigned reading
14-Jan	<i>What is political science?</i> Textbook, pp. 1-5; Workbook, pp. 7-14 (skim)
14 & 16 Jan	<b>Lab #1: Introduction to political science and SPSS</b>
19-Jan	MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
21-Jan	<i>Definition and measurement of concepts</i> Textbook, pp. 6-22
21 & 23 Jan	LAB CANCELLED
26-Jan	<i>Measuring variables</i> Textbook, pp. 28-32
28-Jan	<i>Describing variables</i> Textbook, pp. 32-44; Workbook pp. 17-29 (skim)
28 & 30 Jan	<b>Lab #2: Descriptive Statistics</b>
2-Feb	<i>Hypothesizing</i> Textbook, pp. 48-58
4-Feb	<i>Comparisons</i> Textbook pp. 58-63; Workbook, pp. 41-58 (skim)

4 & 6 Feb	<b>Lab #3: Transforming variables</b>
9-Feb	<i>Graphing relationships</i> Textbook pp. 63-71
11-Feb	<i>Foundations of qualitative research</i> Workbook, pp. 61-74 (skim)
11 & 13 Feb	<b>Lab #4: Making comparisons</b>
16-Feb	<i>What we now know</i> No assigned reading
18-Feb	<b><u>First exam</u></b>
18 & 20 Feb	LAB CANCELLED
23-Feb	<i>Experimental political science</i> Textbook, pp. 78-86
25-Feb	<i>Causal relationships</i> Textbook, pp. 86-97
25 & 27 Feb	<b>Lab #5: Putting it together</b>
2-Mar	<i>Cross tabular analysis</i> Textbook, pp. 102-113
4-Mar	<i>Comparing means</i> Textbook, pp. 113-118; Workbook, pp. 93-109 (skim)
4 & 6 Mar	<b>Lab #6: Making controlled comparisons</b>
9, 11, & 13 Mar	SPRING BREAK
16-Mar	<i>Random sampling</i> Textbook, pp. 122-140
18-Mar	<i>Making inferences with the normal distribution</i> Textbook, pp. 140-151; Workbook, pp. 123-135 (skim)
18 & 20 Mar	<b>Lab #7: Making inferences about sample means</b>

23-Mar	<i>Qualitative Comparisons</i> No assigned reading
25-Mar	<i>Comparing two means and two proportions</i> Textbook, pp. 155-164
25 & 27 Mar	LAB CANCELLED
30-Mar	<i>From political science (or other) major to employment</i> No assigned reading
1-Apr	<i>What we now know</i>
1 & 3 Apr	LAB CANCELLED
6-Apr	<b><u>Second Exam</u></b> No assigned reading
8-Apr	<i>Chi-squared</i> Textbook, pp. 164-169; Workbook, pp. 139-150 (skim)
8 & 10 Apr	<b>Lab #8: Chi-squared</b>
13-Apr	<i>Measures of association</i> Textbook, pp. 169-177
15-Apr	<i>Correlation</i> Textbook, pp. 182-187; Workbook, pp. 159-173 (skim)
15 & 17 Apr	<b>Lab #9: Measures of association and correlation</b>
20-Apr	<i>Bivariate regression</i> Textbook, pp. 187-196
22-Apr	<i>Multivariate regression</i> Textbook, pp. 196-206
22 & 24 Apr	<b>Lab #10: Regression</b>
27-Apr	<i>Contemporary political science research exercise</i> Assigned reading to be announced
29-Apr	<i>Conclusion</i> No assigned reading
4-May	<b><u>Final Exam, 8:00am-10:30am</u></b>