

Political Science 200, Methods of Political Science
Fall 2016
CRN 13211, 3SH
12:00-12:50 MWF, 319 BSB
R. H. Bruhl

Syllabus

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Office: 1114C BSB

Hours: MW 11:00-11:50, 2:00-3:30

Course Objective. The purpose of this course is to provide the political science student an opportunity to learn the methods of political science by conducting primary research projects using the methods most frequently employed by political scientists. Correspondingly, each student will complete projects addressing each of the following methodological tools:

- 1) Ethnography;
- 2) Open-ended survey;
- 3) Closed-ended survey;
- 4) Direct behavioral observation;
- 5) Historical analysis;
- 6) Experimentation; and
- 7) In-depth interviewing.

Reading. To frame the project work of this course, we will read several works considered to be at the foundation of the scientific study of political and social behavior:

- 1) *Politics*, by Aristotle;
- 2) *The Prince*, by Machiavelli;
- 3) *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, by Hume; and
- 4) *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, by Weber.

We will also read (5) *The Vice Lords*, by Keiser as an example of the ethnographic method of social group analysis. Finally, the textbook for this course (6) will be *Empirical Political Analysis*, 8th edition, by Brians, Willnat, Manheim, and Rich. **All of these books are required and a written or discussion assignment will be required for each text.** In addition to the preceding books, we will also read several articles that will be provided by the instructor.

Projects. The majority of our class time will be focused on the completion of three major projects, and the completion of these projects will constitute the majority of each student's grade. The projects are:

- 1) An individual ethnography of some small, informal group;
- 2) An in-class research topic designed and implemented by the class members; and
- 3) An individual survey project.
- 4) Participation in Constitution Day Activities.
- 5) Participation in National Student Issues Convention.

Because we will be conducting primary research, each student will be required to complete the on-line “Investigator Training” course sponsored by the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at UIC. The training course is provided by the organization CITIPROGRAM in concert with UIC. To complete the program, follow the following steps:

- (1) Go to www.citiprogram.org;
- (2) Register, and set your affiliation as “University of Illinois, Chicago;”
- (3) Go to the main menu;
- (4) Go to “Add a course;”
- (5) Select “Group 2: Social / Behavioral Research;”
- (6) Complete the “Initial Investigator Training Course,” which consists of 17 modules;
- (7) Upon passing the course, print the completion certification;
- (8) Submit the certificate to me.

YOU MUST COMPLETE THIS TRAINING AND SUBMIT THE COMPLETION CERTIFICATE IN PRINTED COPY TO ME BY SEPTEMBER 9, 2016.

IF YOU HAVE COMPLETED THIS TRAINING FOR ANOTHER COURSE, YOU STILL MUST SUBMIT A PRINTED OF YOUR COMPLETION CERTIFICATE TO ME BY SEPTEMBER 9, 2016.

STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT COMPLETING THIS TRAINING OR HAVE NOT SUBMITTED THE TRAINING CERTIFICATE IN HARD COPY TO ME WILL NOT RECEIVE A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE.

Attendance and Class Conduct. Because we will be designing and conducting in-class research projects, regular attendance is critical. Consequently, **attendance will be considered in the calculation of the student’s grade for the in-class project and separately in the calculation of the student’s final grade for the class.** As a matter of courtesy, cellphone usage, texting, internet browsing, and internet chatting are all prohibited during class time. Eating in class is also prohibited. If warnings prove to be insufficient, I reserve the right to ask offending students to leave the class.

Schedule of Reading Assignments and their Grading.

Reading Assignments	Discussion Date	Points
<i>The Vice Lords</i>	8/29/16	10
<i>Empirical Political Analysis</i> , Chapters 1-4	9/7/16	20
<i>Politics</i>	9/16/16	10
<i>The Prince</i>	9/23/16	10
<i>Empirical Political Analysis</i> , Chapters 5-8	9/30/16	20
Doctor Strangelove Analysis	TBD	10
<i>Empirical Political Analysis</i> , Chapters 9-12	10/10/16	20
“Experimental Demonstrations of the ‘Not-So- Minimal’ Consequences of Television News Programs”	10/17/16	10
<i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i>	10/24/16	10
<i>Empirical Political Analysis</i> , Chapters 13-16, 21	10/31/16	25
<i>The Theory of Social and Economic Organization</i>	11/7/16	10
“The House Appropriations Committee as a Problem of Integration”	11/16/16	10
Total Reading Points		165

Because our in-class project work will depend upon variable factors of design, data acquisition, and analysis, some of the Discussion Dates may be deferred to dates later than scheduled above. Any written assignment submitted after the actual class discussion without approval by the Instructor may be assessed a penalty of 20% of the point value for the assignment.

Project, Assignments, and Total Grading.

Projects and Total Grading	Due Date	Points
Small, Informal Group Ethnography	12/2/16	30
In-Class Group Research Project	12/2/16	50
Individual Survey Project	12/2/16	30
Total Reading Points		165
Constitution Day Participation	9/19/16	10
National Student Issues Convention	10/7/16	10
Attendance		30
TOTAL		325

The grading scale is as follows: 90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; and below 60% = F.

Academic Honesty.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE IN-CLASS GROUP PROJECT, IT IS EXPECTED THAT EACH STUDENT WILL DO HIS OR HER OWN WORK. PLAGIARISM WILL RESULT IN A GRADE OF ZERO FOR THE OFFENDING ASSIGNMENT, AND A SECOND OFFENSE WILL RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE FOR THE COURSE.

Other Policies.

All University-acknowledged religious holidays will be honored, and personal religious absences will be accepted with prior notification of the Instructor.

Finally, any student with special instructional needs is requested to discuss those needs with me at the student's earliest convenience.