

Political Science 200
Methods of Political Science
Fall 2021
CRN 13211, 3SH
10:00-10:50 MWF
BSB 331

R. H. Bruhl
rbruhl1@uic.edu

Syllabus

This course is scheduled to meet on-campus. Due to the COVID situation, masks will be required unless otherwise specified. Please refer to the official notifications from the Chancellor in this regard. Because I will be using Blackboard for distributing class materials and you will be using Blackboard for submitting your assignments, it is important that you have access to Blackboard. **Please review the following technical requirements:**

- **Students not having at-home access to Blackboard should contact the ACCC at consult.helpdesk@uic.edu.**
- **Technical, digital literacy, and research skills you are required to have include:**
 - a) Using the eLearning environment in Blackboard.
 - b) Emailing your instructor and attaching files to emails using the Inbox.
 - c) Verifying your browser is the most current version and browser privacy settings are correct. See the next section below
 - d) Creating files using MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint and attaching these files to your assignment submissions.
 - e) Managing your files. Create a folder for each course you are taking under My Documents on your computer. Create a folder for each week. Save your files often and with Lastname_WeekX-assignmentX.docx. It's recommended that you save several versions to revert back to by adding -v1, -v2 etc. to the end of your filename for example Lastname_Week1-assignment1-v1.docx and Lastname_Week1-assignment1-final.docx.
 - f) You may also be asked to use a webcam and upload videos or audio files, use social media to communicate with your peers, or collaborate electronically.
 - g) **Uploading MS Word, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel, or PDFs in completing assignments. Apple documents cannot be read by Blackboard and must be converted to MS Word documents or PDFs.**
 - h) Researching information in the Library or using the Library databases. Make sure to include citations to avoid plagiarism.
 - i) Copying and pasting (“Control+C” for copying and “Control+V” for pasting on a PC, “Command+C” for copying and “Command+V” for pasting on a Mac) into a MS Word document or PowerPoint file.
 - j) Downloading and installing software and applications.

- **Blackboard Supported Browsers**

Blackboard runs on Mac, Windows, Linux, and mobile device operating systems iOS and Android. Download the free Blackboard App for use on your mobile device. Blackboard recommends using the newest version of the following browsers and applications:

- a) Chrome;
 - b) Firefox; or
 - c) Safari
- **Make sure your browser is up to date. This can be checked at https://media-as.academicpartnerships.com/apoc/browser_check.html.**
 - **Students not having the required technical skills should contact the ACCC at consult.helpdesk@uic.edu**
 - **Students not having the required library and research skills should contact the Library at <https://library.uic.edu>.**

Course Description

Course Objectives The purpose of this course is to provide the political science student an opportunity to learn the methods of political science by experiencing primary research projects using the methods most frequently employed by political scientists. These methodologies include:

- Ethnographic analysis;
- Open-ended surveying;
- Closed-ended surveying;
- Direct behavioral observation;
- Historical analysis;
- Experimentation; and
- In-depth interviewing.

Reading

A. To provide a frame of reference for the empirical study of political behavior, we will read several works considered to “foundational”:

- 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.

B. We will also read *The Vice Lords*, by Lincoln Keiser. This is an excellent example of the ethnographic method of social-group analysis.

C. Finally, our textbook for the course will be *Understanding Statistical Analysis and Modeling*, by Bruhl.

All of these books are required, and written assignments will be required for each text. These books can be obtained through the UIC Bookstore at www.uicbookstore.org. In addition to the preceding books, we will also read several articles and essays that will be provided by the instructor.

Projects A large portion of the activity in this course will be focused on the completion of four major projects:

- 1) Conducting a self-analysis of the student’s social group memberships;
- 2) Conducting a set of in-depth interviews on a topic selected by the student;
- 3) Conducting a literature review of a topic selected from a list by the student; and
- 4) Analyzing survey data provided by the instructor.

Investigator Training 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, and completion of this training is addressed as one of the course assignments.

Tentative Lecture and Discussion Schedule

| Week | Topic |
|--------|--|
| Week 1 | Lectures 1, 2, 3, and 4; “A Taxonomy of Groups”; Instructions for <i>The Vice Lords</i> Reading; Instructions for CITIPROGRAM training; Instructions for “Social Group Analysis” Project |
| Week 2 | Lectures 5, 6, and 7; Bruhl text, Chapters 1 and 2; Instructions for <i>Politics</i> Reading; Instructions for “Social Group Analysis Project” |
| Week 3 | <i>The Vice Lords</i> Discussion; Instructions for <i>The Prince</i> Reading; Instructions for “In-depth Interviewing Project” |
| Week 4 | <i>Politics</i> Discussion; “On Strategic Analysis”; Instructions for “Literature Review” Project |
| Week 5 | <i>The Prince</i> Discussion |

| Week | Topic |
|-------------|--|
| Week 6 | Bruhl text, Chapter 3; “On the Experimental Method”; Instructions for “An Experimental Demonstration of the Not-So-Minimal Effects of Television News” Reading |
| Week 7 | Bruhl text, Chapter 4 |
| Week 8 | “An Experimental Demonstration of the Not-So-Minimal Effects of Television News” Discussion; Instructions for “Dr. Strangelove” Analysis |
| Week 9 | Bruhl text, Chapter 5; Instructions for “Survey Data Analysis Project”; Instructions for <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> Reading |
| Week 10 | “Dr. Strangelove” Analysis Discussion; Instructions for <i>The Theory of Social and Economic Organization</i> Reading |
| Week 11 | <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> Discussion; Instructions for “The House Appropriations Committee as a Problem of Integration” Reading |
| Week 12 | <i>The Theory of Social and Economic Organization</i> Discussion |
| Week 13 | “The House Appropriations Committee as a Problem of Integration” Discussion |
| Week 14 | Closing |

Schedule of Assignments

| Assignment | Due Date | Points |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Understanding Statistical Analysis and Modeling</i> , Chapters 1 and 2 Reading Reflections | 9/3/21 | 15 each |
| CITIPROGRAM Investigator Training | 9/10/21 | 10 |
| <i>The Vice Lords</i> Reading Reflections | 9/10/21 | 10 |
| <i>Politics</i> Reading Reflections | 9/17/21 | 10 |
| Social Group Analysis Project | 9/17/21 | 20 |
| <i>The Prince</i> Reading Reflections | 9/24/21 | 10 |

| Assignment | Due Date | Points |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| Literature Review Project Part A | 9/24/21 | 2.5 |
| <i>Understanding Statistical Analysis and Modeling</i> , Chapter 3 Analytical Exercise | 10/1/21 | 10 |
| In-depth Interviewing Project | 10/1/21 | 20 |
| <i>Understanding Statistical Analysis and Modeling</i> , Chapter 4 Analytical Exercises 1, 2, and 3 | 10/8/21 | 30 |
| “An Experimental Demonstration of the Not-So- Minimal Effects of Television News” Review | 10/15/21 | 10 |
| <i>Understanding Statistical Analysis and Modeling</i> , Chapter 5 Analytical Exercises 1 and 2 | 10/22/21 | 20 |
| “Doctor Strangelove” Analysis | 10/29/21 | 10 |
| Literature Review Project Part B | 10/29/21 | 15 |
| <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> Reading Reflections | 11/5/21 | 10 |
| <i>The Theory of Social and Economic Organization</i> Reading Reflections | 11/12/21 | 10 |
| Literature Review Project Part C | 11/12/21 | 2.5 |
| “The House Appropriations Committee as a Problem of Integration” Project | 11/19/21 | 10 |
| Survey Data Analysis Project | 11/22/21 | 30 |
| Total Points | | 270 |

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

Academic Honesty

IT IS EXPECTED THAT STUDENTS WILL DO THEIR 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.

Any student with special instructional needs is requested to discuss those needs with the instructor at the student's earliest convenience.

All policies regarding student conduct—online and otherwise—are to be followed. Consult your student guide to the University for further details.

Face Masks: *Masks covering both the mouth and nose must be worn at all times by all students, faculty, and staff while on campus and inside any building regardless of vaccination status. If you do not wear a mask, you will be asked to leave the classroom and will not be allowed back in class unless or until you wear a mask. If you have forgotten your mask, you may pick one up from one of the student information desks on campus during the first two weeks of campus. Students who do not comply with the mask-wearing policy will be reported to the Dean of Students. Eating and drinking are not allowed in classrooms.*