

POLS 4280
Advanced Research Methods
Spring 2018

Instructor: Dr. April A. Johnson
Class Time: Mon/Wed 3:30pm-4:45pm
Class Location: Social Sciences Building, Room 3025
Office Hours: Mon/Wed 1:00pm-2:00pm
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Course Description and Objectives

This course uses statistical methods to investigate political relationships. As a continuation of POLS 2280 Research Methods, students are expected to enter the course with a firm understanding of basic concepts in research design. We will spend very little time rehashing topics such as hypotheses, independent and dependent variables, validity and reliability, and sampling methodology. Instead this class is largely hands on, as we introduce quantitative methods through applied statistics. Advanced statistics covered in this course include various general linear models, including ordinary least squares regression and logistic regression. The primary objectives of this course are for you to 1) become critical consumers of quantitative data, 2) become competent producers of scholarly research, and 3) develop (and hopefully publish) your own original contribution to the field of political science. *Credit Hours: 3 Prerequisite: POLS 2280 Research Methods*

Required Texts

No official textbook has been designated for this course, though required supplemental readings will be assigned and posted in D2L each week.

Evaluation of Course Objectives

Research Exercises: The bulk of work in this class comes from the completion of eight research exercises. Exercises are meant to assess your comprehension of the material and to give you hands on experience critiquing and developing empirical work, the majority of which will be incorporated into your final paper. Instructions for each exercise will be distributed approximately two weeks before the due date. Exercises are due at the *beginning* of class unless otherwise noted. We will also have seven in-class workshops during the semester. While these technically count as part of your attendance/professionalism grade, participating in workshops should greatly assist you when it comes to completing research exercises.

Final Paper: The goal of this course is for students to develop their own original, empirical project and to disseminate this work with the broader scholarly community. In other words, the research paper you create in this course will be submitted to a real, academic journal for potential publication. Note that while this task may seem daunting, this course was designed so that the completion of individual research exercises should help students build their paper/project throughout the semester. Final papers should be 15-20 pages and include the following components: Abstract, background/literature review, research question, hypotheses,

data and methodology, results, discussion, and concluding thoughts. Specific formatting guidelines for the final paper, as well as a grading rubric, can be found in D2L.

Research Presentations: Progress on your research project, as well as your skill in communicating data and analyses to others, will be assessed within one midterm presentation and one final presentation. Each presentation will last approximately 8-10 minutes, followed by a Q & A session from the audience. Instructions and grading criteria for these assignments can be found in D2L.

Attendance/Participation/Professionalism: Most students cannot learn the concepts of Advanced Research Methods on their own, outside of the classroom. Therefore, it is *absolutely critical* for you to attend class. Students are given one excused absence per semester. In general, however, I expect students to come to each class, to be attentive, and to be engaged in both lectures and discussion. *Please note that showing up late and/or leaving early is disruptive to the classroom flow (meaning- don't do it!).*

Attending class does not equate to participating in it. Participation includes asking questions about the readings (write down questions as you read!), answering questions posed by the instructor, and responding to the comments made by your classmates. I encourage all students to think critically and to share their insights and inquiries with the class. *Note that due to our small class size, you will be expected to engage and participate in each and every class period.*

In addition to attendance and participation, students will be assessed on the professionalism with which they conduct themselves. Professionalism means that students are focused on course material, accountable for their own learning and respectful in their communication both inside and outside of the classroom. Incivilities, such as texting, chatting, or excessive classroom disruptions, will lower your grade in this course.

Readings: Required supplemental readings will be assigned throughout the semester, at the discretion of the instructor. These readings will be tailored to the interests, questions, and pace of learning specific to our unique assortment of students. Note that readings are not a punishment, they are meant to help you!

Distribution of Grades

10%	Attendance/Participation/Professionalism		
15%	Final Paper		
10%	Midterm Presentation		
10%	Final Presentation		
55%	Research Exercises (breakdown below)		
	5% - Research Question	5% - Research Design	10% - Data Analysis I
	5% - Article Critique	5% - Student Critique	10% - Data Analysis II
	10% - Literature Review	5% - Data Submission	

Grading Scale

A	90-100	C	70-79	F	59 or below
B	80-89	D	60-69		

Electronics Policy

Above all, please be respectful to both the instructor and your fellow classmates when using electronic devices. While electronics are not prohibited in the classroom, students generally do better by [taking handwritten notes](#) and [minimizing digital distractions](#). In order to maximize your in-class learning, attentiveness and participation I highly recommend unplugging. If a student's use of electronics is consistently problematic/disruptive I will ask them to leave the classroom.

Policy for Missed or Late Work

Missing or late work/attendance will be accepted only under extenuating circumstances and with proper (medical) documentation. Students will generally not be allowed to make up missing coursework/attendance due to transportation, weather, technology, family and/or personal issues, though certain exceptions may be made on a case by case basis.

Religious Holidays

Students who wish to observe religious holidays must notify the instructor of the date(s) they will be absent within the first two weeks of class. The instructor will make every reasonable effort to honor the request and not penalize the student for missing the class. If an examination or project is due during the absence the instructor will give the student an opportunity to complete the assessment at an earlier date.

Disability Policy

Students who require accommodations (e.g., extra time on exams, designated note takers, etc.) to complete and participate in this course are welcome. However, in order for the instructor to recognize these accommodations students must officially document their disabilities with the office of Student Disability Services. *Note: Students seeking accommodations should do so within the first two weeks of the semester, as testing and documentation often takes time. The instructor will not grant accommodations retroactively.* Please visit the Student Disability Services website at sss.kennesaw.edu/sds.

Electronic Communication

Communication for this course will be sent to your official university email address. ***It is your responsibility to read the email in your official university email account and to do so in a timely manner (at least twice per week).*** If you choose to forward your official university email to another off-campus account, faculty are *not responsible* for any undeliverable messages to your alternative personal accounts.

Writing Assistance

The KSU Writing Center helps students in all disciplines improve their written work. Experienced, friendly writing assistants work with you on topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment, visit www.kennesaw.edu/writingcenter, or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic honesty and adherence to KSU's Student Codes of Conduct is expected at all times. Any student found to have engaged in academic misconduct such as plagiarism, collusion, or submitting non-original work is subject to disciplinary sanctions from the Department of Student

Conduct and Academic Integrity. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. The term “collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for academic credit. Students are advised that faculty routinely use online software (e.g., Turnitin, SafeAssign) both to prevent plagiarism and to assist in verifying when/if it has occurred.

If I suspect that a student has committed plagiarism, even if it is his or her first time, the student will receive a zero on the assignment and an incident report will be filed with the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. For more information about plagiarism and prevention go to www.plagiarism.org. To view the Kennesaw State University Student Codes of Conduct visit <https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/content/ksu-student-code-conduct>.

Miscellaneous Policies

[Academic Honesty/Integrity Statement](#)

[Ethics Statement](#)

[Confidentiality and Privacy Statement \(FERPA\)](#)

[Sexual Harassment Statement](#)

[Course Accessibility Statement \(ADA statement\)](#)

[University – Student Rights Statement](#)

[Campus Carry Information](#)

Enrollment Status Statement: Students are solely responsible for managing their enrollment status in a course; nonattendance does not constitute a withdrawal.

Disclaimer

The instructor reserves the right to amend or correct this course syllabus as necessary.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic
Mon 1/8	Introduction
Wed 1/10	Politics as an Empirical Study
Mon 1/15	<i>MLK Jr. Holiday</i> <i>No Class</i>
Wed 1/17	Demystifying Scholarly Research
Mon 1/22	<i>Workshop: Introduction to SPSS and Large Sample Datasets</i> Research Question Due
Wed 1/24	Hypotheses and Variables
Mon 1/29	Measurement
Wed 1/31	<i>Workshop: Compiling a Bibliography and Learning APSA Style</i> Article Critique Due

Mon 2/5	The Logic of Causal Inference
Wed 2/7	Statistical Inference: Population vs. Sample
Mon 2/12	<i>Workshop: Finding and Coding Observational Data</i>
Wed 2/14	<i>Workshop: Descriptive Statistics and Visualization</i> Research Design Due
Mon 2/19	Midterm Presentations <i>In-Class Student Critique</i>
Wed 2/21	Midterm Presentations <i>In-Class Student Critique</i>
Mon 2/26	<i>Workshop: Organizing and Structuring Your Literature Review</i> Student Critique Due
Wed 2/28	How's it Going? Midsemester Check-In
Mon 3/5	Bivariate Relationships and Cross-Tabulation Data Submission Due
Wed 3/7	Hypothesis Testing
Mon 3/12	T-tests
Wed 3/14	Confidence Intervals <i>Deadline to submit to KSU Symposium of Student Scholars (extra credit)</i>
Mon 3/19	Difference Tests Literature Review Due
Wed 3/21	ANOVA
Mon 3/26	Introduction to Regression
Wed 3/28	Bivariate Regression Data Analysis I Due
Mon 4/2	<i>Spring Break</i> <i>No Class</i>
Wed 4/4	<i>Spring Break</i> <i>No Class</i>

Mon 4/9	Multivariate Regression
Wed 4/11	Logistic and Ordered Logistic Regressions
Mon 4/16	<i>Workshop: Running and Interpreting Regressions</i>
Wed 4/18	<i>Workshop: Cleanly and Accurately Presenting Your Results</i> Data Analysis II Due
Mon 4/23	Final Presentations
Wed 4/25	Final Presentations <i>Final Paper Draft Due</i>
Mon 4/30	Paper Revisions and Formatting, Identifying Journal Submission Guidelines, Creating a Cover Letter
Final Paper Submission Friday, May 11, 2018 by 11:59pm	

To view academic deadlines visit <http://registrar.kennesaw.edu/>