

# Political Science 30

## Political Inquiry

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Winter 2018: Prof. Dan Butler, [dmbutler@ucsd.edu](mailto:dmbutler@ucsd.edu)

Lecture: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10-10:50 am, Center Hall 101

Office Hours: 369 Social Science Building, Mondays and Wednesdays, 1-2pm.

Final: Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:00am-10:59am (location to be determined)

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This course introduces the tools of political inquiry, including research design, causal inference, and basic statistical methods. These tools are essential for assessing the validity of others' studies and for conducting your own research.

The readings combine textbook explanations of the methods with examples of how they are put into practice. Through a set of homework assignments, you will be asked to conduct your own analysis of a question of your choosing, using a dataset that we will provide. In order to work with the data, you will learn how to operate a statistics program (STATA). The two primary goals of the course are:

1. To provide you with analytic tools that will help you understand how political scientists do research.
2. To improve your ability to pose and answer research questions on your own.

### Textbooks

The following are required and may be purchased online or at the bookstore:

- Galderisi, Peter. Understanding Political Science Statistics.
- Seljan, Ellen and Galderisi, Peter. Understanding Political Science Statistics Using Stata

The other reading assignments are posted on the TritonED course website (and also at the UCSD library's E Reserves website, at <http://reserves.ucsd.edu>). The course website will also include information on lectures, assignments, etc.

### Course Assignments

› 40% Four Homework Projects (10% each). Due on the following dates:

HW1: February 5

HW2: February 21

HW3: March 7

HW4: March 14

› 30% Final Exam (Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:00am-10:59pm)

› 20% Midterm Exam (Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, in class)

› 10% Section Attendance and Participation

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with University rules and regulations. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with University regulations regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

**Sections:** The course will include two weekly lectures and one discussion section. Please complete all readings and be prepared to discuss them in section each week. Students are responsible for both the information presented in class and in the readings, so please attend regularly. **In Week 4 (Jan 31-Feb 2), your sections will meet in Sequoyah Hall 142.**

**Exams:** There will be an in-class midterm on Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, as well as a final exam on Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The final will be comprehensive, but will feature topics from the second half of the course more prominently. All exams will be closed book, and composed of short answers, identifications, true-false, math problems, and essays. Since the emphasis of statistical questions will be on understanding and interpretation, calculators will not be permitted (or needed).

**Grade Changes and Extensions:** All requests for grade changes must be made formally to your TA, within one week of getting back your assignment or test. Requests must be typed and double spaced, and review of a grade may result in either a higher or lower grade. Extensions on assignments and make-up exams will only be granted in cases of documented illness or family medical emergencies. Please contact your teaching assistant as soon as possible if you need to request one. We will return your assignments in a timely fashion in section, and you are responsible for picking them up in section to confirm that we did in fact receive and grade them. Due to university policy, no grade changes may be requested on the final except in cases of our clerical error. (Note: We will **not** grant any extensions because stolen or damaged computers. This does happen, so you should be in the habit of using the Dropbox or another free cloud service to back up all of your work automatically whenever you save it so that you never lose it).

**Assignments:** Each student will be required to turn in four homework assignments at dates to be announced. The assignments will be a combination of problem sets and portions of a research project based on the analysis of a dataset. You must select one of the provided political science data sets to work on in the first assignment, and the last assignment will consist of your 3-5 page report. The report will be graded on both substance and style. Each student must do his or her own exercises alone, subject to university regulations prohibiting plagiarism and cheating.

**Extra Credit.** You may earn 1 point towards your course grade by participating in the Omnibus Political Science Survey (OPSS). You will be contacted by email during the term with information regarding the survey and how you can complete it.

As an alternative to participating in the survey, you can read and write a 1-2 page response to an article of the instructor's choosing.

## Reading Assignments

### *Part I. Exploring Causal Hypotheses*

1. Monday, January 8. Introduction
  - a. No reading assigned.

2. Wednesday, January 10. The Grammar of Causal Theories.
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, Chapter 1.
3. Wednesday, January 17. The Fundamental Problem of Causal Inference.
  - a. *Associated Press*, “Study: Delayed Schooling Linked to Increased Risk of Behavior Problems,” October 7, 1997.
  - b. *Associated Press*, “Early Exposure to Math Seen as Boost to College Admission.”
  - c. Mike Schleeter, “Restrictions Miss the Point,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 23, 1997.
  - d. *Reuters*, “Early Onset of Drinking Linked to Future Alcohol Abuse,” January 15, 1998.
4. Monday, January 22. Experiments: Isolating a Causal Factor by Randomly Assigning It.
  - a. Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. 2000. The Effects of Canvassing, Direct Mail, and Telephone Contact on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review* 94:653-663.
  - b. Jennifer Merollo, S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, and Chris Haynes, “‘Illegal,’ ‘Undocumented,’ or ‘Unauthorized’?: Equivalency Frames, Issues Frames, and Public Opinion on Immigration,” *Perspectives on Politics* (11):789-807.
5. Wednesday, January 24. Quasi-experiments: Good Enough for Social Science.
  - a. Donald T. Campbell et al., “Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding,” *Law and Society Review*, 1968.
  - b. Jared Diamond, “A Natural Experiment of History,” pp. 53-66 of *Guns, Germs and Steel*, W.W. Norton and Company, 1999.

## *Part II. Describing and Collecting Data*

6. Monday, January 29. Measurement I: We Know a Good Measure When We See It.
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, Chapter 2
  - b. *STATA Manual*, pages 1-19.
7. Wednesday, January 31. Measurement II: Quantifying and Describing Variables.
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, Chapter 3 and Last part of chapter 4 (pp 89-98)
  - b. *STATA Manual*, 20-69

NOTE: Section meetings Jan 31-Feb 2 will be held in Sequoyah Hall 142

8. Monday, February 5. Drawing a Sample.
  - a. Michael Kagay, “A Sample of a Sample,” *New York Times*, Nov. 4, 1999.
  - b. Lynda Gledhill “Poll on State Budget: It’s All in the Asking,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 18, 2003.
  - c. Jim Rutenberg, “Report Says Problems Led to Skewed Surveying Data,” *New York Times*, November 5, 2004.
  - d. HW1 Due at beginning of lecture

### Part III. Testing Causal Hypotheses

9. Wednesday, February 7. Probability Theory and the Magic of the Normal Distribution.
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, Chapter 5.
10. Monday, February 12. Midterm (For Lectures 2-8), in class.
11. Wednesday, February 14. Inference and Hypothesis Testing
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, Chapter 6.
  - b. *STATA Manual*, pages 70-80
12. Wednesday, February 21. Isolating Causal Factors by Using Tables and Charts.
  - a. James Fowler, "The Colbert Bump in Campaign Donations: More Truthful than Truthy," PS, July 2008, pp. 533-539.
  - b. Wolfinger and Rosenstone, Chapter 2 of *Who Votes?* Yale University Press, 1980, especially Tables 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6.
  - c. *STATA Manual*, pages 81-92
  - d. HW2 Due at beginning of lecture
13. Monday, February 26. How Sure is Sure? Quantifying Uncertainty in Tables.
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, Chapter 9.
14. Wednesday, February 28. Using Graphs to Display Data.
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, pages 39-48.
15. Monday, March 5. Linear Regression I: Scatterplots and Regression Lines.
  - a. *Of Observations and Expectations*, Chapter 11.
16. Wednesday, March 7. Linear Regression II: Interpreting Regression Coefficients.
  - a. *SPSS Manual*, pages 71-80.
  - b. Diana C. Mutz, "The Dog that Didn't Bark: The Role of Canines in the 2008 Campaign," PS, October 2010, pp. 707-712.
  - c. HW3 Due at beginning of lecture
17. Monday, March 12. Regression III: Dummy variables and Interaction Terms
  - a. Reading TBA
18. Wednesday, March 14. Qualitative Research Design
  - a. Dreze and Sen, "China and India" from *Hunger and Public Action*, Oxford University Press, 1989.
  - b. HW4 Due at beginning of lecture