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# RESEARCH METHODS

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(Example Seminar Syllabus)

Instructor: Dr. Angela F. McCarthy

Zoom Personal Meeting ID: 227 595 9385

Zoom Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/my/angelamccarthy>

Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday, 3 pm – 5 pm, Wednesdays 1 pm – 3:30 pm, (or) by appointment

Advising Hours: Monday, by appointment (9 am – 5 pm)

Email: [angelamccarthy@ufl.edu](mailto:angelamccarthy@ufl.edu)

## **BASIC COURSE COMMUNICATION INFORMATION**

*Communication:* The best way for us to communicate is through Canvas messages or by email. For questions regarding graded work or course assignments, the safest way to communicate is through Canvas messages.

*Office Hours:* I am (almost) always available for students to inquire about their grades, discuss weekly assignments, or chat about research. I am available Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3 pm until 5 pm, Wednesdays 1 pm – 3:30 pm, (or) by appointment. If the planned office hours do not fit your schedule, let's make an appointment. I am happy to accommodate your scheduling needs.

*Email Response:* If I do not respond to your email inquiry within 24 hours, you should email me again. You are not “bugging” me with a follow-up email. I should respond to ALL emails within 24 hours. If you email me during scheduled office hours, I will email you within the hour. This is my commitment to you.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course aims to introduce students to research design and the methods used for investigating contemporary (political) issues. Throughout the semester, students will learn how to conduct original research and present their research designs to their colleagues. This course aims to provide students with tools to critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of methodological approaches used in research. Overall, this course is designed to instruct students on the appropriate way to conduct social science research. To meet the objectives of this course, we will explore (1) the logic of social science research, (2) the elements of the empirical research process, and (3) research design. Throughout the semester, students will develop an original research project.

## **COURSE FOCUS**

Students will:

1. Analyze the logic of scientific research
2. Describe the scope of political science research
3. Understand central concepts related to the research process
4. Achieve a basic foundation on using computers for data analysis
5. Produce an original research project

### REQUIRED READING AND COURSE TEXTS

1. Johnson, Reynolds, and Mycoff (2019) Political Science Research Methods (9<sup>th</sup> Edition)
2. Mycoff (2020) Working with Political Science Research Methods: Problems and Exercises (5<sup>th</sup> Edition)
3. Academic Articles: These materials are posted in Canvas and are required. The selected articles are published in leading academic journals and provide an example of (good) scholarly research. Note: There are two days that students will choose and discuss articles based on their research interests and projects.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **RESEARCH PROPOSAL: 40%**
2. **EXERCISE SETS: 30%**
3. **PARTICIPATION/ARTICLES/WORKSHOPS: 20%**
4. **FINAL PROJECT/PRESENTATION: 10%**

### GRADED WORK DESCRIPTION

See Canvas > "Grading Rubric" for a complete description of graded work (with links to assignment examples and expectations). In sum:

1. Research Proposal: 40%. There are six research proposal assignments. The assignments are designed to guide you through writing a research paper proposal. Each assignment tackles a core component of conducting original research: research topic and question, literature review, theory development and hypothesis formation, data and variable description, and results and discussion. You will submit each component (separately), and I will provide feedback. You are expected to apply my critique (from the individual assignments) to your final research proposal assignment (i.e., Final Projects).

- Research Topic & Question
- Literature Review
- Theory and Hypothesis(es)
- Data/Mechanics and Variable description
- Results and Discussion
- Drafts (with Introduction and Conclusion)

Formatting Criteria:

- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman or Calibri font
- 12-point font
- 1-inch margins
- Citations required
  - Format: (Author Date) or Author (date)
    - no comma between author and date

2. Exercise Sets: 30%. There are weekly chapter problem sets. Collectively, these problem sets are labeled "Exercise Sets." There are two Exercise Sets due this semester. Exercise Sets include completed questions from the weekly problem sets. Each Exercise Set is worth 15% of your final grade in the course. You should complete the problem sets each week; however, you will only turn in your answers twice during the semester. Questions will come from the Mycoff (2020) workbook. Do NOT answer all questions. I will provide a list of questions that you are required to answer the week *before* the questions are assigned/outlined on the syllabus.
3. Participation/Workshops/Article Reviews: 20%. Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions and workshops. Students are required to read and come to class prepared to discuss assigned research articles during "workshop" sessions. After students decide on the topic of their research proposals, each student will choose one scholarly article for the class to read. Students will lead the class discussion when their chosen article is assigned. The articles will be posted for download to Canvas by September 5. Article discussions are during "workshop" periods on Thursdays.  
  
Note: I am happy to work with you to ensure that you can (safely) participate. I have created a Zoom link (see Canvas) for all our class meetings. If you need to attend virtually, I understand. We will discuss this at length during our first class. [See Canvas for more information.]
4. Final Project/Presentation: 10%. Students will submit their final projects and present their research at the Political Science Undergraduate Conference.

#### **GRADING POLICIES AND GRADING SCALE**

Grading in this class is consistent with UF policies available at [Grades and Grading Policies](#).

*Policy on Late and Make-up Work:* Late work is not accepted. If you find yourself unable to complete your assignments on time, email me *before* the assignment is due. I reserve the right to make an exception, provided valid documentation. Of course, students can make up assignments due to a university obligation, illness, death of a family member, or civic duty. Students who miss an assignment and have a valid excuse are given two days after the missed assignment to arrange a makeup. Otherwise, you are not allowed to make up the assignment. Without a valid reason, you are not allowed to make up assignments. Click [here](#) to read the University attendance policies.

*Grade Return Timing:* Grading is done on Fridays. All assignments in this class are due on Thursday. Thus, you will have your graded work back to you within 48 hours (barring natural disasters, illness, or internet issues). Click [here](#) for information on current UF grading policies.

*Point Range for this Class:*

Letter Grade	Range:	
A	100 %	to 94.0%
A-	< 94.0 %	to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 %	to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 %	to 84.0%
B-	< 84.0 %	to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 %	to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 %	to 74.0%
C-	< 74.0 %	to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 %	to 67.0%
D	< 67.0 %	to 64.0%
D-	< 64.0 %	to 61.0%
F	< 61.0 %	to 0.0%

**UF POLICIES SHAPING THIS COURSE**

**Contact Hours:** *“Contact Hours” refers to the hours per week in which students are in contact with the instructor, excluding office hours or other voluntary contact. The number of contact hours in this course equals the number of credits the course offers.*

**In-Class Recordings:** *Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A ‘class lecture’ is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To ‘publish’ means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.*

**Workload:** *As a Carnegie I, research-intensive university, UF is required by federal law to assign at least 2 hours of work outside of class for every contact hour. Work done in these hours may include reading/viewing assigned material and doing explicitly assigned individual or group work, as well as reviewing notes from class, synthesizing information in advance of exams or papers, and other self-determined study tasks.*

*Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). This class supports the needs of different learners; it is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.*

*[Disability Resource Center](#) ([DRCAccessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:DRCAccessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu) | 352-392-8565) helps to provide an accessible learning environment for all by providing support services and facilitating accommodations, which may vary from course to course. Once registered with DRC, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.*

*Statement regarding Evaluations: Evaluations are part of our course. To ensure the highest quality of education, students are expected to provide professional feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Students can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [GatorEvals Public Data](#).*

#### **ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

*UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” [The Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.*

#### **UNIVERSITY POLICE**

[UF Police](#) (352- 392-111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies)

#### **CAREER CONNECTIONS CENTER**

[Career Connections Center](#) (352-392-1601 | [CareerCenterMarketing@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:CareerCenterMarketing@ufsa.ufl.edu)) connects job seekers with employers and offers guidance to enrich your collegiate experience and prepare you for life after graduation.

#### **COUNSELING, HEALTH, AND WELLNESS**

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care](#) to refer or report a concern, and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [Student Health Care Center](#) website.

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call: 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center](#) website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

#### **DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE**

[Dean of Students Office](#) (352-392-1261) provides a variety of services to students and families, including [Field and Fork](#) (UF's food pantry) and [New Student and Family programs](#)

#### **MULTICULTURAL AND DIVERSITY AFFAIRS**

[Multicultural and Diversity Affairs](#) (352-294-7850) celebrates and empowers diverse communities and advocates for an inclusive campus.

#### **OFFICE OF STUDENT VETERAN SERVICES**

[Office of Student Veteran Services](#) (352-294-2948 | [vacounselor@ufl.edu](mailto:vacounselor@ufl.edu)) assists student military veterans with access to benefits.

#### **ONE.UF**

[ONE.UF](#) is the home of all the student self-service applications, including access to:

- [Advising](#)
- [Bursar](#) (352-392-0181)
- [Financial Aid](#) (352-392-1275)
- [Registrar](#) (352-392-1374)

#### **OFFICIAL SOURCES OF RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The official source of rules and regulations for UF students is in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and [Graduate Catalog](#). Quick links to other information have also been provided below.

- [Student Handbook](#)
- [Student Responsibilities](#), including academic honesty and student conduct code
- [e-Learning Supported Services Policies](#) includes links to relevant policies including: Acceptable Use, Privacy, and many more
- [Accessibility](#), including the Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Policy and ADA Compliance
- [Student Computing Requirements](#), including minimum and recommended technology requirements and competencies

Date	Topic	Textbook Readings	Academic Articles	Exercises	Proposal	Workshops
8/24	Introduction	Syllabus	--	--	--	--
8/26	Introduction	Syllabus	--	--	--	R, LaTeX Introduction
8/31	Introduction to Social Science Research  The Research Article	PSRM CH1: Introduction  PSRM CH15: The Research Report: An Annotated Example	Mansbridge (2014): "What is Political Science Research For?"	--	--	--
9/2	Introduction to Social Science Research  The Research Article	--	Shively (2011): "The Craft of Political Science Research, Chapter 1: Doing Research"	Ch 1	--	Research Article Compilation/  Literature Review Materials
9/7	Empirical Approach to Political Science	PSRM CH2: The Empirical Approach to Political Science	Margolis (2018): JOP Example: "How Politics Affects Religion: Partisanship, Socialization, and Religiosity in America"  Mason (2015): AJPS Example: "I Disrespectfully Agree: The Differential Effects of Partisan Sorting on Social and Issue Polarization"  Goren and Chapp (2017): APSR Example: "Moral Power: How Public Opinion on Culture Wars Issues Shapes Partisan Predispositions and Religious Orientations"	--	--	Research Article Discussion
9/9	Empirical Approach to Political Science	PSRM CH2	--	Ch 2	--	R Workshop
9/14	Beginning the Research Process	PSRM CH3: Identifying a Research Topic, Developing Research Questions, and Reviewing the Literature	Knopf (2006): "Doing a Literature Review"  Prior (2013): "Media and Political Polarization"  Boix (2008): "Economic Roots of Civil Wars and Revolutions in the Contemporary World"			Research Article Discussion
9/16	Beginning the Research Process	PSRM CH3	--	Ch 3	Research Topic/ Research Question Due	Data Collection Lab
9/21	The Building Blocks of Research	PSRM CH4: Hypotheses, Concepts, Variables, and Measurement	Calhoun-Brown (2000): "Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement"  Delton et al. (2018): "Partisan Goals, Emotions, and Political Mobilization: The Role of Motivated Reasoning in Pressuring Others to Vote"	--	--	Research Article Discussion
9/23	The Building Blocks of Research	PSRM CH4	--	CH 4	--	--

9/28	Sampling/ Experiments	PSRM CH5: Sampling	Gerber and Green (2001): "Do Phone Calls Increase Voter Turnout"  Broockman and Green (2014): "Do Online Advertisements Increase Political Candidates' Name Recognition of Favorability"	--	--	Research Article Discussion
9/30	Sampling	PSRM CH5 Pew Survey Reports	--	CH5	--	Literature Review Workshop
10/5	Review	--	--	--	--	--
10/7	Mental Health Day (No Class)	--	--	--	--	--
10/12	Research Design	PSRM CH6: Establishing Causation	Lewis-Beck et al. (2008): "Economics, Party, and the Vote: Causality Issues and Panel Data"  Class Choice (TBD)	Exercise Set 1 (October 16)	Literature Review	Research Article Discussion
10/14	Research Design	PSRM CH6	--	CH6	--	--
10/19	Data Collection	--	--	--	--	Data Collection: Qualitative/Quantitative
10/21	McCarthy Presentation at Senior Center (No Class)	--	--	--	--	--
10/26	Qualitative Research	PSRM CH7: Case Study Designs	Woliver (2002): "Ethical Dilemmas in Personal Interviewing"  Stewart et al. (2009): "Group Depth Interviews: Focus Group Research"		--	Research Article Discussion
10/28	Qualitative Research	PSRM CH7	--	CH7	Theory/ Hypothesis	IRB Speaker
11/2	Making Empirical Observations: Qualitative Analysis	PSRM CH8: Qualitative Analysis	Craig (2000): "Seminole Tribe of Florida (focus group Report)"		--	Research Discussion
11/4	Making Empirical Observations: Qualitative Analysis	PSRM CH8	--	CH8	--	Interpreting Data
11/9	Quantitative Research Design	PSRM CH9: Quantitative Designs	Tavits (2011): "Power within Parties: The Strength of the Local Party and MP Independence in Postcommunist Europe"	PSRM CH9	Data/ Variable Description	Research Article Discussion
11/16	Quantitative Methods	PSRM CH10: Quantitative Methods	Garand et al. (2017): "Immigration Attitudes and Support for the Welfare State in the American Mass Public"	--	--	Research Article Discussion
11/18	Quantitative Methods	PSRM CH10	Class Choice (TBD)	CH10	--	Research Article Discussion
11/23	Making Sense of Data: First Steps	PSRM CH11: Making Sense of the Data: First Steps	--	CH11	Results/ Discussion	--
11/25	Thanksgiving (No Class)	--	--	--	--	--
11/30	Research Papers	--	--	--	Draft with Intro and Conclusions	Workshop/Presentation of Research



<b>12/2</b>	Research Papers	--	--	Exercise Set #2	--	Workshop/Presentation of Research
<b>12/4 (Sat.)</b>	Conference Presentations (details TBD: health crisis permitting)					
<b>12/7</b>	Research Proposals Due	--	--	--	Research Proposals Due	--
<b>12/9-12/10</b>	Reading Days (No Class)	--	--	--	--	--