San José State University
Political Science
POLS 100M Section 2 Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Kristina Mitchell
Office Location:	Clark Hall 404B
Telephone:	408-924-6424 (email is best!)
Email:	Kristina.mitchell@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 12-3pm
Class Days/Time:	T/R 10:30-11:45am
Classroom:	DMH 160

Course Description (Required)

Introduction to the scope and methods of political science. Beginning with research design, measurement, and ethical considerations, and including a variety of research methods including surveys, experiments, interviews, fieldwork, content analysis, and an introduction to quantitative and qualitative analysis. Notes: Should be taken junior year. Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) (Required)

Course and GE Learning Objectives (CLOs and GELOs):

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
1) Compare and contrast the ways social scientists study phenomena. (Exam 1)
2) Develop hypotheses, conceptualize and measure variables. (Exam 1)
3) Match best-suited research methods to research questions. (Exam 1)
4) Construct a research design for an original social science research project. (Exam 2 and Final Paper)
5) Interpret original social science research. (Exam 2)

The Political Science Department has the following objectives for its students:

1) Breadth: Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.
2) Application and Disciplinary Methods: Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, evaluate research studies, and critically analyze and interpret influential political texts. Students should be able to apply these techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.
3) Communication Skills: Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.
4) Citizenship: Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

Textbook

Janet Buttolph Johnson, H.T. Reynolds and Jason D. Mycoff's Political Science Research Methods, 8th edition (Los Angeles: Sage, 2016, ISBN: 978-1-5063-0782-4)Course Requirements and Assignments (Required)

Exams:

Each student must take three exams worth 20% each. There will be three midterm exams and an optional comprehensive final exam. NO MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN. The comprehensive final may be used as a makeup for a missed exam or as a replacement for your lowest midterm score.

Paper:

Students will be expected to an 8-10 page paper using quantitative analysis to examine a political or social science phenomenon and provide a suggested policy response based on this empirical evidence. This is makes up 35% of your course grade, and will be completed in parts throughout the course of the semester.

The research paper will be evaluated on the following components:
-Research Question
-Literature Review
-Description of Data
-Description of variables
-Data analysis
-Conclusion & policy recommendation

No late papers will be accepted!

Lab Assignments:

This is a statistics course that requires an understanding of mathematical concepts. We will be working in the computer lab learning how to understand and interpret data throughout the semester. The lab component will also help you complete your research paper!

Grade Distribution

The grading breakdown for the course assignments is as follows:
- Lab assignments: 20%
- Final Paper – 35%
- Exams – 45% (15% each)

You can use this grade distribution to calculate what is possible for you based on your grades on assignments. Please note the weighting of each assignment and keep it in mind as your complete your work.

Final Grade Determination

97 & above: A plus
92-96: A
90-91: A minus
87-89: B plus
82-86: B
80-81: B minus
77-79: C plus

72-76: C
70-71: C minus
67-69: D plus
62-66: D
60-61: D minus
59.99 & below: F

I do not have a policy of rounding grades. Rounding and curving decisions are made by the professor after all final grades are calculated. Even an 89.999 can be considered a B plus. Grades are not assigned based on individual need.
• Do not contact me with a question or request for your final grade to the rounded, curved, or increased.
• Do not contact me asking for extra credit that has not been specifically offered to the whole class via email announcement.

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Classroom Protocol

Course Rules

1. Always maintain professional and respectful language, in class, in emails and in your coursework.
2. Any disruptive or disrespectful behavior will result in a loss of credit for the assignment and possibly a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. Racism, sexism, homophobia, or any other forms of bigotry are not acceptable in this class.
3. You are responsible for all information and announcements made in the course. Prepare to log onto Canvas every day to check for updates, changes, or new information. Read the course home page thoroughly and check announcements daily. Course rules, schedule, and day-to-day are subject to change, please pay close attention to course announcements.
4. Late work will not be accepted for any reason. To be clear, late work will not be accepted for any reason whatsoever.
5. Students may not print, save, photograph, or make any record of graded content in this course.

Professionalism

Here is a quick-start on professionalism in your communication with your professors:
• Don't ask a question that you could have answered yourself. Read all information and instructions in Canvas before you send an email.
• Use an appropriate Subject Line that identifies yourself and your concern (don't just say, "HELP")
• Address the recipient by his or her professional title, such as Professor, Dr., Mr., or Ms. (NOT Mrs. or Miss unless instructed otherwise)
• Your first sentence should introduce yourself and include your course and section number. • Be specific about what your request is. Demonstrate that you have read and understood course information and instructions.
• Use proper grammar and spelling. Punctuate and capitalize. Proofread.
• Allow 24 hours for a response to your email during the week. Do not expect email responses on weekends. Do not send multiple emails on the same topic within a 24 hour period without waiting for a response.

If you send an email that does not follow these guidelines, don't be surprised if you get a response that states, "Please revisit the Professionalism section of your course home page and email again."

University Policies (Required)

Per University Policy S16-9 *(http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf)*, relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/" Please be sure to go over these policies..

Course Schedule

Class/Lab Schedule

Note the lab days!

Week 1 – January 23
Class Introduction

Week 2 – January 28th
Political Science as Science
Research Design & Literature Review
Johnson & Reynolds Chapters 1 & 2

Week 3 – February 4th
Building Blocks of Social Science
Causal Inferences
Johnson & Reynolds Chapters 3, 4, & 5
Lab: February 5th

Week 4 – February 11th
Sampling & Data Collection
Johnson & Reynolds, Chapters 8-10

Week 5 – February 18th
Exam Review

Exam 1 February 20th

Week 6 – February 25th
Descriptive Statistics
Johnson & Reynolds Chapter 11

Week 7 – March 3rd
Univariate analysis
Statistical Inference
Johnson & Reynolds Chapter 12
Lab: March 5th

Week 8 – March 10th
Univariate analysis
Statistical Inference

Week 9 – March 17th
Exam review
Exam 2 March 19th

Week 10 – March 24th
Bivariate Analysis
Johnson & Reynolds Chapter 13

No Class March 30th-Apr 3rd

Week 11 – April 7th
Bivariate & Multivariable analysis
Lab: April 9th

Week 12 – April 14th
Multivariable Analysis
Exam Review

Week 13 – April 21st
Exam 3 April 21st
Lab: April 23rd

Week 14 – April 28th
Meet in lab every day
Research Papers

Week 15 – May 5th
Paper due at end of by May 5th
Final Exam Review May 7th

Final Exam May 18th @ 9:45 (final exam schedule is online at SJSU website)