

**San José State University**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**Political Inquiry, POLS-100M Section 02, Spring 2023**

**Course and Contact Information**

**Instructor(s):** Xintong Chen

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**Office Hours:** M/W 3 – 4p and by appointment

**Class Days/Time:** M/W, 1:30 - 2:45p

**Classroom:** Hugh Gillis Hall 116

**Course Description**

**From the SJSU Course Catalog:** 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.

This course can be divided into three sections. In the first section, we will introduce the research process and the components of designing a research proposal. In the second section, we will turn to measurements and data collection method and a variety of research method.

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. CLO1: Identify sources of good research and research data, as well as explain why and how these are sources are valid. This outcome is assessed by class participation, group research project, and final exam.
2. CLO2: Understand the process of political science inquiry, including common data collection and sampling techniques. This outcome is assessed by class participation, group research project and final exam.
3. CLO3: Explore basic quantitative strategies for data analysis and hypothesis testing. This outcome is assessed by class participation, homework assignments and final exam.

4. CLO4: Communicate their results effectively to others through presentation and research proposal. This outcome is assessed by group research project presentation and group research project.

### **Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](#) on [Spartan App Portal](#) (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](#).

### **Communication and Office Hour**

I provided all course materials on Canvas and will frequently make announcements on Canvas. It is essential that you check the class Canvas page routinely. I am available to meet you every Monday and Wednesday afternoon 3:00 to 4:00. Free feel to contact me through email as well if you have any questions.

### **Required Texts/Readings**

#### **Textbook**

- Johnson J. B., Reynolds H.T., and Mycoff J.D. Political Science Research Methods, 9th ed., (Sage CQ Press, 2019) ISBN# 978-1544331430

*Please note older editions of this book is perfectly acceptable to purchase. However, key information, page numbers and chapter numbers may vary from edition to edition. It is the student's responsibility to account for these discrepancies when they exist.*

**Laptop are required for this class. You can borrow a laptop free for a semester from library using the following link.**

<https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/equipment/index.php>

**Students are also required to download and have available for their use a copy of SPSS. Students can download this program for free at**

<https://www.sjsu.edu/it/services/collaboration/software/instructions/index.php>.

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

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 practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

**Group Research Project (45%).** Students will self-organize into groups of 2 or 3 based on a shared research interest. Groups will then select a research topic in political science. The research project will include three assignments. This assignment evaluates CLOs #1, #2, and #4.

- **Research Outline (10%).** As a group, students will outline their research proposal in this assignment. To be more specific, students will fill out two forms that are provided on Canvas. One form asks students to develop research questions, hypothesis and causal mechanism. Another form asks students to define their dependent and independent variables.

- **Research Paper (20%).** Groups will develop the research topic into a research proposal. The research proposal will include three sections, which are introduction, literature review, and method. More details about this assignment are available in Group Research Project Guidelines and Group Research Project Grading Rubrics on Canvas. This assignment evaluates CLOs #1, #2, and #4.
- **Research Project Presentation (15%).** Each research project group will provide a 12 to 15 minutes presentation. In the presentation, briefly discuss the three sections of research proposal. This assignment evaluates CLOs #1, #2, and #4.

**Exams (40%).** There will be one midterm and one final exam. Details will be provided at the appropriate time. You should finish exam independently and do not engage in plagiarism. If you have a verifiable medical or family emergency, please contact me ASAP to make arrangements. This assignment evaluates CLOs #1, #2, and #3.

**Participation and in-class activities (10%).** Regular class attendance is highly encouraged, though per University Policy F-15-12 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf>), students will not be graded on daily attendance. We will be using class time to engage in hands on learning with group projects and other in-class activities to meet course objectives. This assignment evaluates CLOs #1, #2, #3 and #4.

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### Assignments and Due Dates

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Group Research Project (include the following three assignments)

Outline	2/22
Presentation	5/10
Paper	5/10

Exams

Midterm	3/15
Final Exam	5/23

Class Participation	NA
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### Grading Information

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>960 to 1000</i>	<i>97 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>930 to 959</i>	<i>93 to 96.99%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>900 to 929</i>	<i>90 to 92.99%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>860 to 899</i>	<i>86 to 89.99 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>830 to 859</i>	<i>83 to 85.99%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>800 to 829</i>	<i>80 to 82.99%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>760 to 799</i>	<i>76 to 79.99%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>730 to 759</i>	<i>73 to 75.99%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>700 to 729</i>	<i>70 to 72.99%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>660 to 699</i>	<i>66 to 69.99%</i>

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>630 to 659</i>	<i>63 to 65.99%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>600 to 629</i>	<i>60 to 62.99%</i>

And assignments and exams will be weighted accordingly:

<b>Assignments and exams weights</b>	
Group Research Project (include the following three assignments)	45 Points
Outline	10 Points
Presentation	15 Points
Paper	20 Points
Exams	40 Points
Midterm	20 Points
Final Exam	20 Points
Class Participation	15 Points

### **Cellphones, laptops, and other technology**

Students may not use their cell phone for non-class purposes in class. Laptops, tablets, and other such technology are allowed in class but for notetaking and educational use only.

### **Make-up/Late Policy**

Students are expected to complete assignments on time and turn them in by the beginning of class on the day they are due. Students are not allowed to make up homework assignments and group research project presentation. If these are not completed, the student will receive a zero for that day. For the group research project, 10 points will be deducted on top of the students' grade for each day it is late. Students only have up to a week to turn in a late assignment; after that, it will be a zero. The late policy may be waived at the instructor's discretion in case of an emergency. If an emergency arises that prevents you from completing your work on time, please email the instructor as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for you to keep up in the class. Emergencies are defined as anything which is serious and unexpected. Emergencies cannot be written on the calendar in advance. Examples of emergencies are heart attacks, car accidents, a serious health crisis of the student or in the student's immediate family. Examples of non-emergencies are family weddings, vacations, conferences or any other event which can be planned around.

### **Collaboration**

For this course, note that 45% of a student grade is tied to group deliverables. Note that at the end of the Semester, Student will assess their own contribution to the group project and the contribution of your teammates. Students' final project grade will be adjusted according to their contribution to the group. A blaring lack of contribution may affect a group member's final project grade negatively.

### **University Policies**

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information](#)

[web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

## **Workload and Credit Hour Requirements**

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 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

## **Political Science Department Writing Policy**

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks. Ideas from others must also be referenced. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct, which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/writeandcite>. The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center visit <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>.

## **Useful Information for Students**

### **SJSU Counseling Services**

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

### **Student Technology Training Center**

Student Technology Training Center is located in King Library. The Training Center is dedicated to providing software training and support to San Jose State students, faculty, and staff. Need to learn a software program (such as SPSS) to complete a class project, or develop something for your student organization? You can request a one-on-one meeting with one of our talented staff members. To make an individual or small group appointment, visit Student Technology Training Center website at <https://library.sjsu.edu/student-technology-training/student-technology-training-center>.

### **Spartan Food Pantry**

The Spartan Food Pantry is a walk-in, full-service, staffed, food assistance program offering non-perishable goods, fresh produce, and refrigerated items to eligible students. No student should have to face food insecurity. We define those in

need as students who have limited or uncertain access to nutritious and safe foods because of a lack of money and other resources. For more information, visit Spartan Food Pantry website at <https://www.sjsu.edu/sjsucares/get-assistance/spartan-food-pantry.php>

## Political Inquiry, POLS-100M Section 02, Spring 2023

Please note, the schedule below is subject to change with fair notice. It is the student's responsibility to stay apprised of changes to the course schedule.

### Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
<b>Research Design</b>				
1	1/25	Introduction and Overview		
2	1/30	Empirical Research and Philosophy of Knowledge	Chapter 2	
	2/1			
3	2/6	Beginning the Research Process-Identifying Research and Review the Literature	Chapter 3	
	2/8			
4	2/13	The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research	Chapter 4	Group formation
	2/15			
5	2/20	The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research	Chapter 4	Research project outline
	2/22			
6	2/27	Sampling	Chapter 5	
	3/1			
7	3/6	Research Design and Midterm Review	Chapter 6	
	3/8			
<b>Measurement and Data Collection</b>				
8	3/13	<b>Midterm Exam; no class on Monday and exam on Wednesday</b>	Exam preparation	Midterm exam
	3/15			
9	3/20	Qualitative Research	Chapter 7 & 8	
	3/22			
10	3/27	<b>Spring Recess (No Class)</b>		
	3/29			
11	4/3	Quantitative Research	Chapter 9 & Chapter 10	
	4/5			
12	4/10	Quantitative Research	Chapter 10	
	4/12			
13	4/17	Making Sense of Data: first step	Chapter 11	
	4/19			
14	4/24	Testing Relationships	Chapter 12	
	4/26			
15	5/1	Writing Your Own Research Report	Chapter 15	

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
	5/3			
16	5/8	Group Presentations		Group paper
	5/10	Group Presentations		
17	5/15	Final Exam Review		
<b>Final Exam Tuesday May 23 12:15 to 2:30 pm</b>				