Course Description & Objectives

This course is designed to provide students with a survey of social science, particularly how it is conducted to study politics and society. Each week the course examines a different problem we can solve with the help of rigorous research methods and tests to better describe a particular phenomenon or trend. Throughout the course students have the opportunity to showcase their comprehension through in-class assignments, class discussions, conducting their own research, and presenting a plan to conduct original research. The course is focused on analysis and evaluation, however the assignments set an equal emphasis on strengthening how we ask questions in political science. The skills you learn in this course can be applied in your professional career, be it conducting policy research, suggesting reforms by adjusting incentives in a market, or going beyond this course in graduate school.

Learning Objectives

The course is designed with the objective that by the end the semester each student has the ability to:

- Build an argument to answer a falsifiable question by gathering observations and building on existing knowledge.
- Understand how data is generated and develop a research design that mirrors the real-world process.
- Recognize the limitations of what a research method can be used to explain - especially given the unit of analysis.
- Gain experience in conducting rigorous social science through multiple different methods including estimating empirical results and archival research.
- Annotate content from primary resources.
- Interpret the results of a linear regression model and describe the probability that a finding may be significant.
- Defend an argument in public, by understanding the results based on the method of research and observations that tell the story.

Required Books

All texts can be found in the bookstore or online.


Student Evaluation  Expectations for all work

All work must be original - including only direct quotes without any analysis will result in a 0. Work that largely summarizes or only paraphrases work from other sources will not receive more than a B-. A papers must synthesize arguments and facts to build justifications for the author’s main point (or argument).

All missed in-class activities will be counted as a zero, if not excused beforehand.

Should it be necessary for a student to make up either of the first two exams, that will be done toward the end of the term.

All out of class assignments are due at the beginning of the class. Failure to turn in an assignment on time will result in a penalty of one letter grade per day. Assignments not received within two days of the deadline will no longer be accepted.

All readings are expected to be completed before class. Although not all readings will be discussed in class, this does not negate your responsibility to know the assigned material.

Assignments & Participation

There will be six assignments throughout the semester to make up 300 points. Each activity will correspond with the research method and question we are covering that week. Some work will be done in class - the rest of the assignment will be done on your own time. All work must be original - responses that only given the answer, without showing work or providing a description will not receive a satisfactory grade. Note: All missed assignments will be counted as a zero.

I encourage you to CHALLENGE, RESPOND to, & CRITIQUE what you read and hear outside of class. Our goal is to learn by challenging what preconceived notions we may have. With that in mind, 100 points are dedicated to the assessment of your participation.

Archive Document Annotations

Exams

Four exams will be given for a total of 400 points (or 100 points each). The first exam will be on September 25, the second on October 16, the third on November 8, and the final will be on December 15. The final will be cumulative in that it will ask you to draw connections across topics covered throughout the class. Each exam will offer different types of multiple choice, short-answer and essay questions. Some questions may draw from exercises that will require students to apply techniques discussed in class. Each question will hold different point values.

Missing an exam without the confirmation of an alternative test date, before the exam date, will result in a zero. The alternative test will only count when written documentation for missing the exam is provided.
Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>100 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Assignments (x 6)</td>
<td>300 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam I (Sept 25)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam II (Oct 16)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam III (Nov 8)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archival Annotations (Nov 29)</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (Dec 15)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000 points</strong></td>
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Student Conduct

I have high expectations for each student in this class, which are based on your academic performance to get to this point and my belief that you will treat each of your fellow classmates with respect. My goal is to facilitate a supportive and engaging class experience for everyone and one part of that is eliminating disruptive behavior. Using technology in a way that distracts others and demonstrates a lack of respect for the instructor is unacceptable.

**UT Tyler Honor Code**

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do. Students Rights and Responsibilities To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: [http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php](http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php).

**Concealed Handgun Campus Policy**

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at [http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php](http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php).

**Tobacco-Free University**

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit [http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free](http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free).

**Academic Honesty**

It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, cheating, and dishonesty. The University of Texas at Tyler Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs will be strictly followed and can be found here at: [http://www.uttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8Student%20Conduct%20and%20Discipline.pdf](http://www.uttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8Student%20Conduct%20and%20Discipline.pdf). Tests and assignments are designed to assess your understanding of the material–do not reference another student’s answers.

Violations of academic integrity are serious and will have a negative consequence on your classroom performance. In each instance a violation occurs, a failing grade will be assigned for the assignment or the course, require work to be redone, and have you identify what the cause of the violation was. The matter will be referred to the Dean of Students if institutional action is necessary. Reference the rights and responsibilities of students: [http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php](http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php).

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1Should the class schedule need to be amended, I will advise the class in advance by email and via the course page
Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar. Each semesters Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date (Sept 12th) is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:
- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services:

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu.
Student Absence due to Religious Observance:
Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities
If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor with official documentation at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement:
It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation:
Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructors directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

If you have any questions or concerns about what is expected or permissible in this course or about academic integrity in general, please contact me.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct:
Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

i. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:
   - copying from another students test paper;
   - using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
   - failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
   - possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed crib notes. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
   - using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
   - collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
   - discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
   - divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
   - substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;

falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;

taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and

misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

ii. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit.

iii. Collusion includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

**UT Tyler Resources for Students**

UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu

UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu

The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.

UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

**Class Schedule**

**Week One**

**Aug 28-Sept 1**

Introduction and Overview

**Week Two**

**Sept 4**

Labor Day, *No Class*

**Sept 6**

Research, Ethics, Data Protection

*Readings: Pierce, Chapter 2*

**Sept 8**

Finding a Research Question

*Readings: Baglione, Chapter 2*

*Assignment: UT Tyler IRB Certification*
Week Three

Sept 11  Studying Political Science and Society  
*Readings:* Pierce, Chapter 3

Sept 13  Proper Citation  
*Readings:* Baglione, Chapter 3

Sept 15  Library Resources  
*Assignment:* Annotated Bibliography

Week Four

Sept 18  Methodologies  
*Readings:* Pierce, Chapter 4

Sept 20  Constructing Reliability and Validity  

Sept 22  Research Designs & Effects  

Week Five

Sept 25  Exam I

Sept 27  Data Collection  
*Readings:* Pierce, Chapter 5  
County Donation Codebook  
*Assignment:* Data Collection for assigned candidate

Sept 29  Summarizing & Visualize Data  
*Readings:* Pierce, Chapter 13  
*Assignment:* Report: What generalizations can be made from your dataset?
Week Six

Oct 2  Evaluating Published Research
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 6

Oct 4  Reliability, Validity, and Triangulation
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 7

Oct 6  Inference Workshop
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 14


Assignments:
Complete Worksheet in Class

Week Seven

Oct 9  Reviewing and Synthesizing the Literature
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 8

       Baglione, Chapter 4

Oct 11 Asking Questions: Elite Interviewing
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 9

       Fenno, Richard. “Appendix on Participant Observation.”

Oct 13 Observation & Distilling an Argument
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 11


       Baglione, Chapter 5

Week Eight

Oct 16 Exam II

Oct 18 Analyzing Research: The Process
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 12

       Baglione, Chapter 4

Oct 20 Qualitative Information
       Readings: Pierce, Chapter 17
Week Nine

Oct 23  Principles of Archival Research

Oct 25  Archival Research & Digitizing Documents

Oct 27  Practicing Annotations

Assignment:
Complete Two Annotations, giving systematic comparisons.

Week Ten

Oct 30  Understand the Context


Nov 1    Testing for Association

Readings: Pierce, Chapter 15

Nov 3    Testing Causality

Week Eleven

Nov 6    Exam Review

Nov 8    Exam III

Nov 10   Veteran’s Day - Continue to Revise Archive Annotations

Week Twelve

Nov 13   Legislative History

Readings: HEINOnline

Nov 15   Writing Up Your Results

Readings: Pierce, Chapter 20

Nov 17   Writing Up Your Results

Readings: Pierce, Chapter 20

Week Thirteen

Nov 19-24 Fall Break
<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 27</td>
<td>Annotation of Archived Documents: <em>Identify &amp; Draft</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 29</td>
<td>Annotation of Archived Documents: <em>Revise &amp; Peer Edit</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Readings: Pierce, Chapter 18</em></td>
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**Week Fourteen**

**Week Fifteen**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>Evidence Based Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 8</td>
<td>Value of Applying Methods - Final Exam Review</td>
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**Exam Week**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 15</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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