

POLI 200: The Study of Politics

University of Redlands

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Fall Term 2022

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Course Site: [Canvas](#)

Office Hours: T/Th, 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM (PST) Class Hours: T/Th, 2:40 – 3:55 PM (PST)

Office: Hall of Letters, Room 324

Class Room: Hall of Letters, Room 321

Course Safety Protocols

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the course format may be subject to change with little to no notice, depending upon state, local, and University guidelines. The University of Redlands' mandatory safety measures may be stricter than local, state or federal guidelines and may be subject to change at any time. The COVID-19 pandemic requires all of us to accept the possibility that changes in how this course is taught may be required and that some changes may occur with little or no notice. If any changes occur, you will be given clear instructions as to how to proceed. The uncertainty of the pandemic situation is not ideal for any of us, but we must all try to approach this situation with good-will, flexibility, and mutual understanding.

Course Catalog Description

Overview of approaches to the study of politics. Students develop skills necessary to read, assess, and produce works of social science. Coursework involves analytic reviews of monographs and articles, production of literature reviews, and the development of an independent research proposal.

Course Description

This course introduces you to the fundamentals of research. In doing this, we will provide you with a methodological foundation based on the most common approaches to research in Political Science. This includes, but is not limited to: formulating questions, designing and implementing appropriate data collection strategies, and analyzing results using different forms of regression and/or experimentation. In doing this, we will provide you with the tools necessary to pose

research questions, generate theories, derive hypotheses, test your theories, argue your positions, control for confounding factors, maintain proper treatment and experimental groups, analyze data, and interpret results. Each of these skills are important for both your performance in upper-division political science courses as well as for your personal marketability when seeking opportunities outside of the University. This course is your first step at to developing these skills while at the University of Redlands. No prior knowledge of Political Science is required; all that is required is an open mind and a willingness to learn.

Course Objectives

Our course objectives are as follows:

1. Generate, conduct, and evaluate empirical research
2. Develop fundamental literacies in understanding political and social research
3. Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of various research approaches
4. Reason and think critically and creatively about the relationship between structures, institutions, and agency
5. Assess the validity and reliability of your own and others' research

The course assumes familiarity with (*very*) basic algebra for understanding some of the analytic portions of the readings. We will build on this throughout the course, so there is no need to come in with more than that and a willingness to learn.

Textbooks

The textbook for the course is:

- Johnson, Janet Buttolph, Henry T. Reynolds, and Jason D. Mycoff. (2015) *Political Science Research Methods (Ninth Edition)*. CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1544331430

This textbook is referred to throughout the **Weekly Schedule** section as JRM (referring to the authors: Johnson, Reynolds, and Mycoff).

All texts referenced in the **Weekly Schedule** section of the syllabus are available online via **Canvas**. It is highly recommended that students complete the readings and assignments prior to course sessions each week.

However, in the case of external materials for your research design project, you will have to familiarize yourself with external research sites, such as [Google Scholar](#) and [JSTOR](#).

Course Structure

Assignment Overview

Grading is facilitated through class meeting attendance and participation, homework assignments throughout the term, two exams, and a research proposal project in three parts.

Assignment Weights

The weights associated with each of the course assignments are as follows:

- Attendance (Throughout term: 5%)
- Participation (Throughout term: 5%)
- Homework Assignments (Throughout the term: 15%)
- Multiple Choice Exam (Week 7: 15%)
- Final Exam (Finals Week: 20%)
- Research Project: Basics (Due Week 7: 5%)
- Research Project: Literature Review (Due Week 11: 15%)
- Research Project: Proposal (Due Week 14: 20%)

In-person and Digital Meetings, Attendance, Materials

As this is an in-person course, all meetings will be held physically on campus. Any digital meetings due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic or otherwise will be announced in class or on Canvas. Digital Meetings require the Zoom platform. The schedule for all meetings can be found at the end of the syllabus in the Weekly Schedule section. The course will only be taught in-person unless the University states otherwise.

Attendance requires physically being present when roll-call is taken in the case of in-person meetings, while it requires being on Zoom during roll-call in the case of digital meetings. In both instances, leaving mid-way through a class will result in a penalty towards attendance.

All Course Material will be posted on Canvas, while any supplementary material or recordings will be posted to an online media repository, such as YouTube, for streaming. In the latter case, this means only those with access to the links associated with each video will have the capacity to access that material, as they will be unlisted and private otherwise. At the end of the term, all material will be removed from the online media repository.

Grading Policy

A standard grading scale will be used. Your instructor reserves the right to curve the scale dependent on overall course grades at the end of the semester (not before it). Any curve will only ever make it easier to obtain a certain letter grade.

The grade grading scale is as follows:

A	=	94 - 100+%	B	=	84 - 86.99%	C	=	74 - 76.99%	D	=	64 - 66.99%
A-	=	90 - 93.99%	B-	=	80 - 83.99%	C-	=	70 - 73.99%	D-	=	60 - 63.99%
B+	=	87 - 89.99%	C+	=	77 - 79.99%	D+	=	67 - 69.99%	F	=	59.99% - 0%

Course Policies

The Syllabus

The syllabus is a contract between the instructor and the students enrolled in this course. If you decide to remain in the class, you accept the course requirements and thereby agree to abide by them. It is important that you know what this class entails, that you acknowledge its requirements and evaluation criteria, and that you make a commitment to finishing the work in a timely and responsible fashion. If necessary, the syllabus and its contents are subject to revision; students are responsible for any changes or modifications posted on the University of Redlands' course management system, Canvas.

Audio and Video Capabilities

You must have access to a computer with audio and video capabilities in case of remote instruction, as well as to review any recorded (if applicable) or supplementary material. While you are not required to turn on your video camera during any potential digital meetings, you should at the least be able to ask questions verbally should the need arise. If you have a disability that prevents you from expressing yourself verbally, you are welcome to participate using text via the Chat feature on Zoom instead. In all cases, please mute your microphone on Zoom unless you have a question or wish to comment on the material. In fact, you are welcome to interject at any point during a remote class meeting should you have a question or wish to comment on the material. Otherwise, please mute your microphone until you are ready to speak so as to not unnecessarily disturb others. Be courteous of others.

Attendance Policy

The material for the course can at times seem complex if students do not attend lecture regularly. It is therefore suggested you attend as many (if not all) of the class meetings as you can. Attendance will be taken in each course session and will count towards your final grade. If there is an issue preventing you from attending, do reach out and/or come see the Instructor sooner rather than later. I will require verification for all excused absences.

Late Assignment and Make-up Work Policy

Except when otherwise indicated, late assignments will be deducted one and one-half (1 1/2) letter grade for every twenty-four (24) hours it is late, up to a maximum of forty-eight (48) hours. After forty-eight (48) hours, the student will receive a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. There are no opportunities to make-up or revise an assignment for a higher grade, although an alternative assignment may be provided in the case of an emergency as outlined under the "Emergencies and Exceptional Circumstances" section of this syllabus.

Emergencies and Exceptional Circumstances

Should an emergency arise, the student must contact the Instructor as soon as possible, and preferably before a class session. Any emergencies must be accompanied by evidence (i.e., note from a Doctor as evidence of having been in a hospital). Routine checkups are not considered medical emergencies and should thus be discussed with the Instructor as soon as possible *before* they occur. Any accidents must be accompanied by photographic evidence by email. Failure to contact the Instructor in a timely manner will result in a judgment call on the Instructor's part and is completely dependent on the gravity of the situation. In all cases, the Instructor's decision on the matter is final.

Exams

All exam information will be distributed at least one week before each exam.

Challenging a Grade

Students who wish to challenge a grade are required to submit a written grievance, which includes: the reasons for their dissatisfaction, the grade received, and what grade they believe is merited. Reasons why the requested grade is merited should be supported by evidence from the assignment or exam in question to justify this appeal. The written grievance should be submitted at least two business days before meeting with the Instructor to discuss the assignment. If you choose to appeal your grade, the Instructor reserves the right to issue a grade that is lower than the existing grade. This second, post-appeal decision is final. *The deadline to challenge and possibly change a grade is within forty-eight (48) hours after the posting of the grade on Canvas.*

Statement on Academic Integrity and Honesty

The University of Redlands is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor and referral to the University's Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion.

University of Redlands Office of Academic Success & Disability Services (ASDS)

If you feel you need accommodation to address the impact of a learning or physical disability, please speak with me privately to discuss your specific needs. For the safety and wellbeing of our community, the Office of Academic Success & Disability Services (ASDS) is working remotely. All students are welcome to contact us by phone at 909-748-8069, or by email at asds@redlands.edu if you have questions or would like to set up a remote meeting. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process should occur at least a week before any accommodation can be utilized.

Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation

The University of Redlands is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in the University of Redlands' **Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation**. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the **Dean of Student Affairs** and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.

Religious Diversity

Religious Accommodation at the University of Redlands is consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to fulfill their obligations to the university without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their sincerely held religious obligations. Please review the syllabus early in the semester and consult with your faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with major religious holidays, being as specific as possible regarding when those holidays are scheduled in advance and where those holidays constitute the fulfillment of your sincerely held religious beliefs.

Respect for Others

Discriminatory/hateful/pejorative and/or demeaning language will not be tolerated. All participants must feel comfortable asking questions and speaking, as voicing one's ideas is essential to the learning experience. Please be respectful of all questions, ideas and views. You will be asked to leave the Cisco Webex meeting if you disrespect anyone and/or exhibit any form of the above, and you will automatically receive a zero (0) for any attendance or graded assignments due that day. This zero (0) grade cannot be made up under any circumstances.

DISCLAIMER: This Course Contains Mature Content

Like most university-level courses, this course may deal with material that may be controversial and sensitive for some people. Often, these topics may invoke strong responses based on political affiliation, religious beliefs, personal identity, and experiences. While we will need to engage with such details at times, they will not be the focus of our inquiry. You should nevertheless be prepared to encounter these references. If you have any concerns about any of the material we will be covering in this course at any time, please see do not hesitate to come see me.

Weekly Schedule

The schedule is tentative and subject to change. Be aware that all meetings and deadlines posted are based in Pacific Standard Time (PST).

Week 01, 08/29 - 09/02: Introduction, Syllabus, Policies | JRM Introduction

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30:

- Required Readings:
 - No Readings Assigned this Meeting

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 1
 - Cohen, Patricia. (20 October, 2009) "Field Study: Just How Relevant Is Political Science?" *New York Times*.

Week 02, 09/05 - 09/09: The Empirical Approach to Political Science

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 2
 - Green, Amelia Hoover. (2013). "How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps." *Drexel University*.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 2 (Cont.)

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Kruzal, Joseph. (1994) "More a Chasm Than a Gap, but Do Scholars Want to Bridge It?" *Mershon International Studies Review*.

IMPORTANT:

- **Homework 1** Assigned This Week (Thursday, September 8, 2022)
- **Research Project** Assigned This Week (Thursday, September 8, 2022)

Week 03, 09/12 - 09/16: No Class This Week Due to American Political Science Association Annual Meeting

Week 04, 09/19 - 09/23: Beginning the Research Process: Identifying a Research Topic, Developing Research Questions, and Reviewing the Literature

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 3
 - Knopf, Jeffrey W. (2006). "Doing a Literature Review." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39(1): 127–132.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 3 (Cont.)

IMPORTANT:

- **Homework 1** Due This Week (Tuesday, September 20, 2022).
- **Homework 2** Assigned This Week (Thursday, September 22, 2022)

Week 05, 09/26 - 09/30: The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research: Hypotheses, Concepts, Variables, and Measurement

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 4

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 4 (Cont.)

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Soll, Jacob. (18 December, 2016) "The Long and Brutal History of Fake News" *Politico*.

Week 06, 10/03 - 10/07: Sampling and Research Design: Establishing Causation

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 5

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 6

IMPORTANT:

- **Homework 2** Due This Week (Tuesday, October 4, 2022).

Week 07, 10/10 - 10/14: Study Day | Midterm Exam

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11:

- Study Day: No Class Today
- Review JRM, Chapters 1-6.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13:

- Midterm Exam In-Class Today! Bring your laptops!

IMPORTANT:

- *Midterm Exam on (Thursday, October 13, 2022).*
- *Research Project: Basics Due This Week (Monday, October 10, 2022).*
- *Reminder: Start working on the Research Design: Literature Review Assignment*

Week 08, 10/17 - 10/21: Qualitative Research: Case Study Designs | Making Empirical Observations

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18 :

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 7

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 8

IMPORTANT:

- *Homework 3 Assigned This Week (Tuesday, October 18, 2022)*

Week 09, 10/24 - 10/28: Quantitative Research Designs

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 9
 - Mahoney, James and Gary Goertz. (2006). "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research." *Political Analysis* 14(3): 227-249.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 9 (Cont.)

Week 10, 10/31 - 11/04: Quantitative Methods

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Ch. 10
 - Tarrow, Sidney. (1995). "Bridging the quantitative-qualitative divide in political science." *The American Political Science Review*, 89(2): 471-474.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Ch. 10 (Cont.)

Week 11, 11/07 - 11/11: Quantitative Methods (Cont.) | Making Sense of Data: First Steps

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Ch. 11.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Ch. 11 (Cont.)

IMPORTANT:

- **Homework 3 Due This Week** (Tuesday, November 8, 2022).
- **Research Design: Literature Review Due This Week** (Tuesday, November 8, 2022).
- **Reminder: Start working on the Research Design: Proposal Assignment**

Week 12, 11/14 - 11/18: Testing Relationships | Analyzing Relationships for Categorical Data

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 12.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 13.

Week 13, 11/21 - 11/25: The Research Report: An Annotated Example | Thanksgiving Break

TUESDAY, APRIL 5:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 15.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24:

- Thanksgiving Break! No Class Today!

Week 14, 11/28 - 12/02: Regression | Course Wrap-Up

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29:

- Required Readings:
 - JRM, Chapter 14.

THURSDAY, December 1:

- Course-Wrap Up
- Final Exam Questions?

IMPORTANT:

- *Research Proposal: Due on (Thursday, December 1, 2022)*

Finals Week, 12/03 - 12/07: The Final Exam

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6:

- Final Exam at 3:00 PM (PST)