

Course Syllabus: POL 379*
Research and Writing

Professor: Mike Yawn	
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Office Hours: 5:30-7, W (Sam Center)	Class Time: 1-2, MWF
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Texts: (1) *Blink*, by Malcolm Gladwell; (2) *Aging with Grace: What the Nun Study Teaches Us about Leading Longer, Healthier and More Meaningful Lives*, by David Snowden; (3) *Homestyle: House Members in Their Districts*, by Richard Fenno

Course Overview: The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to research methods in the social sciences and to improve the students' writing skills. We will take up matters of design, data collection, measurement, data analysis, and writing.

Course Objectives: Students are expected to (1) become familiar with the major models of social science research, (2) learn about experimental research, survey research, content analysis, and field research, (3) be able to apply academic models of research to real-world settings, and (4) be familiar with—and adapt to—the professional world of politics.

Attendance: You are strongly encouraged to attend every class session. You will not be penalized for being absent, but you will miss various quizzes, homework assignments, and extra credit opportunities that *cannot be made up*. You are responsible for obtaining notes and handouts that you missed from other students or off the website/blackboard. Tardiness will not be tolerated.

Missed Work: *Missed tests cannot be made up*. However, because the final is comprehensive, it includes questions from material covered on the first test, second test, and material covered subsequent to the second test. If you miss a test, I will simply grade separately the questions on the final that correspond to the missed test. The tests will be announced at least a week in advance, but it is your responsibility to accommodate the class schedule. By enrolling in the course, it is assumed that you will make all the classes.

Classroom Conduct: Students are expected to treat each other and the professor with respect and courtesy. Students should be attentive and engaged at all times. Cell phones and other electronic or distracting items should not be visible or audible (keep in pockets, purses, or bags).

Grades: Your grade in this class will be determined by your performance on three tests, quizzes, homework assignments, and a book critique. The grade breakdown is below, followed by an elaboration. By the way, don't ask me how to figure your grade. If you have made it to college without knowing how to calculate a weighted average, consult a Mathematics Tutor.

Test 1:	15%
Test 2:	15%
Final:	20%
Homework/Quiz:	20%
Leg Briefs:	10%
Book Critique:	15%
Participation:	5%

*I reserve the right to change the syllabus at any time for any reason.

Tests: The tests will be objective (multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank) and/or subjective (essay). The final is comprehensive.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given to ensure that students read their daily assignments. You will have a quiz almost every day there is a reading assignment.

Participation: You are expected to participate in class. Your participation should be constructive and respectful, both to the instructor and other students. I keep a detailed record of who does and does not participate in class, who was and was not able to answer questions, and who indulged in distracting or otherwise negative behavior. You are expected to keep up with current political events. Unprofessional behavior toward me, other students, university staff, or other citizens (while working on school-related matters) is unacceptable, and will be penalized harshly.

Legal Briefs: Students will write two legal briefs over US Supreme Court cases.

Book Critique: Students will write a seven-page critique of *Aging with Grace*. I will provide a brief description of the critique with a list of topics that should be addressed in the paper.

Cheating: The *easiest* way to fail this class is to cheat. Do not copy any work from another student, and do not plagiarize (defined as using someone else's work without proper documentation). At the minimum, I will fail you, but I may also seek to have you expelled from the university. Plagiarism in any of its manifestations will be penalized with the grade of a zero or referral to the Dean. Plagiarism is any use of work that is not your own, which includes use of another's language or research without proper citation (see student handbook for more information on plagiarism). Anytime you quote something or refer to a non-obvious fact then you need a citation. In if in doubt, don't. See the student handbook if you have additional questions about what constitutes plagiarism.

<http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty>

Classroom Rules of Conduct : The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is found at the following link: <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>. Section 5.2.22 defines classroom disturbances.

Q-Drops: A Q-drop is a drop made after the last date for tuition refunds (12th class day for fall/spring; 4th class day for summer) but before the date for which a drop would result in the grade of 'F' as published in the Academic Calendar. Students will be allowed no more than five Q-drops during their academic career at Sam Houston State University. Classes that are dropped prior to the Q-drop date will not count toward the limit. Students who have used their limit of five Q-drops will need to petition their respective dean to drop a class. If the dean refuses to grant permission to drop a class, a student will be required to remain in the class.

This limit took effect with the start of the fall 2004 semester. Any drops accumulated prior to the fall 2004 semester will not be included in the five Q-drop limit, nor will Q drops from other universities.

Additional Info: It is a requirement that you keep up with current events. You can subscribe to a newspaper, watch the news extensively, or check out one of the web sites below. I particularly recommend the first web site, which is a compilation of news from newspapers around the country.

www.realclearpolitics.com, www.washingtonpost.com, www.nytimes.com, www.cnn.com
www.patrickruffini.com

DISABLED STUDENT POLICY: <http://www.shsu.edu/schedule/>

SERVICES FOR DISABLED STUDENTS: <http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel/sswd.html>

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAY POLICY:

<http://www.shsu.edu/catalog/scholasticrequirements.html#holyday>

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Activities
M, 8-25	Intro	None	
W, 8-27	Research Process		
F, 8-29	Research Process		
M, 9-1	Labor Day		
W, 9-3	Sampling	Intro Sampling	Quiz
F, 9-5	Sampling	Types of Samples	Quiz
M, 9-8	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : intro	Quiz
W, 9-10	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : Ch 1	<i>Blink</i> HW 1
F, 9-12	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : Ch 2 Study: Good Father	<i>Blink</i> HW 2: 12th Class Day
M, 9-15	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : Ch 3 Study: Male Dominance	Quiz
W, 9-17	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : Ch 4	Quiz
F, 9-19	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : Ch 5	<i>Blink</i> HW 3
M, 9-22	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : Ch 6	Quiz
W, 9-24	Experiments	<i>Blink</i> : Conclusion	
F, 9-26	Test 1	Test 1	Test 1
M, 9-29	Field Research	Fenno Introduction; 253-263	Fenno HW #1
W, 10-1	Field Research	Fenno 249-253; 263-295	Fenno HW #2
F, 10-3	Field Research		
M, 10-6	Field Research	Fenno Ch 1	Fenno HW #3
W, 10-8	Field Research	Fenno Ch 3	Fenno HW #4
F, 10-10	Field Research		
M, 10-13	Field Research		
W, 10-15	Field Research	Fenno Ch 4	Fenno HW #5
F, 10-17	Survey Research		
M, 10-20	Survey Research		
W, 10-22	Survey Research	JSTOR 1* (Jennings & Niemi)	HW
F, 10-24	Survey Research		
M, 10-27	Survey Research		
W, 10-29	Archival Data	JSTOR 2* (Greenstein)	HW
F, 10-31	Archival Data		
M, 11-3	Research Recap	JSTOR 3* (Yawn et al)	HW
W, 11-5	TBA	TBA	TBA
F, 11-7	Test 2	Test 2	Test 2
M, 11-10	Legal Briefs	Schenck v. US (1919); Gitlow v. NY (1925); Brandenburg v. OH (1969)**	Quiz
W, 11-12	Legal Briefs	Tinker v Des Moines (1969); Johnson v TX (1989); VA v Black (2003)**	Legal Brief #1
F, 11-14	Legal Briefs	Mapp v. Ohio (1961); Gideon v. Wainwright (1963); Miranda v. AZ (1966)**	Legal Brief #2
M, 11-17	Legal Briefs	WV v. Barnette (1943); Engle v. Vitale (1962) Wisconsin v. Yoder (1971)**	
W, 11-19	Resumes		
F, 11-21	Interviews		
M, 11-24	Walk		
W, 11-26	Thanksgiving Holidays		
F, 11-28	Thanksgiving Holidays		
M, 12-1	Aging With Grace	Prologue, Ch 1, Ch 2	
W, 12-3	Aging With Grace	Chs 3-5	
F, 12-5	Aging With Grace	Chs 6-8	
M, 12-8	Aging With Grace	Chs 9-11	
W, 12-10	Aging With Grace	Ch 12	

* JSTOR is a database and index on the SHSU Library webpage. To access this, you should

- 1) go to www.shsu.edu,
- 2) go to the Newton Gresham Library page,
- 3) find JSTOR in the pull down menu under Quick Links to Databases,
- 4) Once you get to JSTOR, you should click on “Search” and then “Advanced Search.”
- 5) You can then find the article by typing in the author’s name or the title.

- 1) Jennings JSTOR: Jennings & Niemi “Transmission of Political Values from Parent to Child”
APSR 1968
- 2) Greenstein JSTOR: Fred Greenstein, Eisenhower as an Activist President: A look at new evidence.
Political Science Quarterly, 1979.
- 3) Yawn JSTOR: Mike Yawn, Bob Beatty, Kevin Ellsworth, Kim Kahn “How a Presidential Primary
Debate Changed Attitudes of Audience Members” *Political Behavior*, 1998

**Background on the court cases should be obtained from the internet.