POL374, Section 01
Quantitative Methods for Political Science
Spring 2011: MWF 11:00 – 11:50 AM, WHI C120

Dr. Stacy Ulbig
E-mail: Ulbig@shsu.edu
Phone: 936-294-1468
Office: CHSS 489
Webpage: http://www.shsu.edu/~sgu001/

OFFICE HOURS:
- Drop-in Office Hours: MW 1:00 – 3:00 PM (in CHSS489)
- Stats Help Sessions: TBD
- By Appointment: Everyday (in CHSS489 or computer lab)

Course Description: This is an introduction to research design and quantitative methods used in contemporary political science research. Students will apply the tools of social science inquiry in a series of projects designed to examine such phenomena as political attitudes and behavior. Emphasis is on the use of descriptive statistics; tabular and graphic presentation of data; measures of association and correlations; and multivariate analysis in political research. Prerequisites: 6 hours POL.

Course Objectives: Specific course objectives include:
- Students will gain factual knowledge and information regarding quantitative statistical methods
- Students will learn fundamental principles and theories in the area of statistical methods
- Students will increase analytical, critical thinking, and communication skills

Textbooks & Required Materials:
In-class assignment workbook. Available on the course Blackboard website.
Additional readings handed out in class, posted on the course Blackboard website, or placed on reserve in Newton Gresham Library.

Optional Materials:
SPSS 18.0 (GradPack). This is the SPSS data analysis software we use in class, and is available on-line for $35.00 (see Blackboard for link to site). This will allow you to load the software on your personal machine and use it for 6 months.

Exams and Grading: Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance on 10 problem sets, in-class exercises, a final project, and a comprehensive final exam:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Problem Sets (10@4% each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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The problem sets will apply concepts discussed in the lectures and the in-class exercises, and will often involve data analysis using SPSS. All problem sets are due at the start of class the day we cover them. Anyone turning in their problem set by 3:00 PM the day before we cover the material in class will be awarded three (3) bonus points on the problem set (i.e., if we cover a problem set in class on Monday, turned in before 3:00 PM the preceding Sunday; problem sets covered in class on Wednesday turned in by 3:00 PM Tuesday; problem sets covered in class on Friday turned in by 3:00 PM Thursday). Problem sets turned in after the start of the class in which we cover the problem set will not be accepted. You will receive a grade of zero (‘0’) for each uncompleted problem set. See FAQs on course Blackboard website for more information about the problem sets and SPSS.

The final project will involve you gathering, coding, and analyzing data. More detailed instructions on this project are posted on the Blackboard course website and/or will be handed out as the semester progresses. See FAQs on course Blackboard website for more information about the final project.

The final exam is cumulative and will involve interpretation of statistical output. See FAQs on course Blackboard website for more information about the final exam.

Course grades will be calculated according to the following scale: A=90.0-100.0; B=80.0-89.999; C=70.0-79.999; D=60.0-69.999; F=less than 60. Please note there is no rounding on overall course grades. PLEASE NOTE: anyone asking me to calculate their grade for them will be penalized 10 points on their overall course grade. See FAQs on course Blackboard website for more information about grading and grade reporting.

Ulbig, POL 374, Section 01
Classroom Rules of Conduct:

Students are expected to abide by the Classroom Rules of Conduct as outlined by the Dean of Students: [http://www.shsu.edu/students/StudentGuidelines2007_2008.pdf](http://www.shsu.edu/students/StudentGuidelines2007_2008.pdf). Further, the use of cell phones is completely prohibited in class. See course FAQs for information about in-class behavior, particularly the penalties associated with using phones in class.

Instructor Evaluations:

Students will be given the opportunity to complete a course/instructor evaluation form near the end of the semester. You may also speak directly with Dr. Ulbig or the Chair of the Political Science Department if you have concerns about the quality of instruction you are receiving.

Academic Dishonesty:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: [http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty](http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty)

Americans with Disabilities Act:

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: [http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.pdf](http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.pdf)

Religious Holidays:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20....” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: [http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.pdf](http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.pdf)
CLASS SCHEDULE & READING ASSIGNMENTS

Note: This schedule and the reading assignments are tentative. Changes will be announced in class.

I. RESEARCH DESIGN

January 21 – January 24: Introduction to the Research Process

January 21: Caldwell, Chapter 1 (pp. 13-16)
Fair, Ray C. Chapters 1 & 2, pp. 5-42 (available on Blackboard)

January 24: Almer, Ennis C., “Liquor Outlets Cause Crime?” (available on Blackboard)
Meier and Brudney, Chapter 3 (available on Blackboard)

January 26 – January 28: Concepts & Measures

January 26: Carlson, James M. and Mark S. Hyde, “Conceptualizing, Operationalizing, and Measuring Variables” (available on Blackboard)

January 28: Caldwell, Chapter 1 (pp. 8-10); Pyrczak, Section 2 (complete worksheet)

JANUARY 31 (MONDAY): PROBLEM SET #1 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

II. DESCRIBING DATA

February 2: Introduction to SPSS


February 4 – February 9: Counting Responses and Displaying Distributions
Caldwell, Chapter 3; Pyrczak, Sections 3-7, 9

FEBRUARY 11 (FRIDAY): PROBLEM SET #2 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

February 14 – February 18: Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion
Caldwell, Chapter 2; Pyrczak, Sections 10-15, 55

February 16: **FINAL PROJECT – PART I: RESEARCH FOCUS DUE**

FEBRUARY 21 (MONDAY): PROBLEM SET #3 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

III. TESTING HYPOTHESES

February 23: Probability
Pyrczak, Section 29; Meier and Brudney, Chapter 7 (pp. 107-111 and 115-120, available on Blackboard)

**FINAL PROJECT – PART II: CONCEPTS & MEASURES DUE**

February 25-28: Probability and the Normal Distribution
Caldwell, Chapter 4; Pyrczak, Sections 16, 18, 30

March 2 (WEDNESDAY): PROBLEM SET #4 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

March 4 – March 7: Sampling and Inference
Caldwell, Chapter 5; Pyrczak, Sections 27, 33-34

March 9 – March 11: Hypothesis Testing
March 9: Caldwell, Chapter 6; Pyrczak, Sections 31-32, 35, 56-58
March 11: Caldwell, Chapters 7 & 9; Pyrczak, Sections 36, 59
March 14 – March 18: Spring Break – No Class Meetings

MARCH 21 (MONDAY): PROBLEM SET #5 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

IV. EXAMINING RELATIONSHIPS

March 23 – March 25: Comparing Two Samples
Caldwell, Chapter 8; Pyrczak, Sections 37-40
March 23: **FINAL PROJECT – PART III: DATA COLLECTION & ENTRY DUE**

MARCH 28 (MONDAY): PROBLEM SET #6 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

March 30 – April 4: Crosstabs & the Chi-Square Statistic
Caldwell, Chapter 11; Pyrczak, Sections 48
April 1: Final Project Workday – No Class Meetings

APRIL 6 (WEDNESDAY): PROBLEM SET #7 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

April 8 – April 11: Crosstabs & Additional Measures of Association
Pyrczak, Section 51

APRIL 13 (WEDNESDAY): PROBLEM SET #8 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

April 15 – April 20: Scatterplots, Correlation, & Bivariate Regression
April 15: Caldwell, Chapter 12 (pp. 275-293); Pyrczak, Sections 19-21
April 18-20: Caldwell, Chapter 12 (pp. 293-303); Pyrczak, Section 25
April 22: Good Friday - No Class Meeting

APRIL 25 (MONDAY): PROBLEM SET #9 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

April 27 – May 2: Multivariate Regression

MAY 4 (WEDNESDAY): PROBLEM SET #10 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS

V. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

May 6 (FRIDAY): **FINAL PROJECT – PART IV: RESEARCH REPORT DUE**

MAY 11 (WEDNESDAY – 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM)
FINAL EXAM
**POL374, Section 01**  
**Quantitative Methods for Political Science**  
**Spring, 2011: MWF 11:00 – 11:50 AM, WHI 120**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

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Finding Dr. Ulbig

Where is Dr. Ulbig’s office?

Dr. Ulbig’s office is located in the CHSS building, Room 489. Go to the fourth floor, go ahead and the left when you get off the elevator, go through the closed door, and then straight ahead until you can go no further. Room 489 is to your left.

When are Dr. Ulbig’s office hours?

Office hours are listed on the course syllabus. For the Spring 2011 semester, drop-in office hours are on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:00-3:00 PM.

Do I need an appointment to see Dr. Ulbig during drop-in office hours?

No. Dr. Ulbig will be available in her office to meet with students who choose to come by during these times. No appointment is necessary at these times.

Is the only time I can meet with Dr. Ulbig during her office hours?

No. There will be scheduled “Stats Help Sessions” throughout the semester. These sessions will be held in a computer lab, and probably in the day or two preceding the due date for problem sets. At the beginning of the semester, the class will work together to determine the best time to hold these help sessions. Once these times are decided, they will be posted on Blackboard.

Additionally, Dr. Ulbig will make appointments at other mutually convenient times/days. Just contact her to arrange a meeting.

How do I contact Dr. Ulbig?

You may contact Dr. Ulbig in a number of ways: by e-mail (Ulbig@shsu.edu), by phone (936-294-1468), by going to her office during drop-in office hours, or by speaking with her before or after class.

Class Facebook & Twitter

How do I find the class Facebook page?

The class is called POLS2261 on Facebook. Just click this link: www.facebook.com/POLS3374 or search for that user and “friend” it. Your request will be accepted within 48 hours.

How do I find the class Twitter page?

The class is user @POLS2261 on Twitter. Just click this link: www.twitter.com/POLAS3374 or search for this user and choose to “follow.”
Do I have to friend the class on Facebook and/or follow the class on Twitter?

No, you do not have to. Your participation on Facebook and Twitter are completely voluntary and are not a formal part of your grade.

Why would I want to follow the class on Facebook and/or Twitter?

There are a few reasons you might want to follow the class on Facebook and/or Twitter. Dr. Ulbig will post lots of good information on these pages – things like links to helpful websites, reminders about class due dates, and hints that can help on the class assignments. These pages are also quick and easy ways to communicate with others in the class (which can be useful when you need to know what happened when you were not in class).

Attendance/In-Class Behavior

Do I have to attend class every day?

No, you do not have to attend class; however, poor attendance will greatly impede your ability to do well in this class. If you are not in class, you cannot earn credit for completing in-class exercises. Further, if you do not attend class on days when assignments are due you cannot turn them in for credit. Finally, if you are not in class you will most likely have difficulty comprehending the course material and course requirements.

Will I be penalized for not attending class?

Yes. Since 10% of your grade is determined by your completion of in-class exercises, poor attendance will cause your course grade to drop. Further, if you do not attend class on days when assignments are due you cannot turn them in for credit.

Can I make up in-class exercises for days that I miss class?

No, in-class exercises cannot be made up. They are in-class exercises. It is a good idea to work through the in-class exercises that you miss so that you can keep up with the class material, but you will earn no credit for doing so.
Is there a penalty for using a cell phone in class?

Yes. Following are the penalties for cell phone use during class time:

- Texting during class: 5 point penalty (on overall class average) for each occurrence;
- Phone ringing during class: 10 point penalty (on overall class average) for each occurrence;
- Phone ringing or vibrating during the final exam: 50 point penalty (on exam) for each occurrence;
- Touching a cell phone during the final exam (other than to turn it off after ringing or vibrating): 60 point penalty (on overall class average)

In-Class Lecture Materials

Can I have a copy of Dr. Ulbig’s lecture notes?

No. Dr. Ulbig’s lecture notes are not available to students.

How do I get notes for class days that I miss?

You will need to speak with a classmate(s) about getting copies of notes for any classes you miss.

Will Dr. Ulbig repeat her lecture for me during office hours?

No. Office hours are meant to be spent answering student questions about the material covered in class and/or class assignments. These hours are not set aside for additional “showings” of the class lectures.

SPSS Software

Do I have to buy/rent the SPSS software?

No, you are not required to purchase access to the SPSS software. However, if you want to be able to work on class problem sets from home, you will want to invest in a access to the software.

Where can I gain free access to the SPSS software?

All on-campus university computer labs will have a copy of SPSS that you may use.

Can I use the “remote login” to use SPSS from home?

No, the license that the university subscribes to will not allow this. Additionally, the program is too cumbersome to run over a remote access connection and would not work.
**Problem Sets**

When are the problem sets due?

*The due date for each problem set is indicated on the course syllabus. Problem sets must be turned in within the first five (5) minutes of class on the day they are due. Any problem set turned in after 11:05 AM on the due date is considered late and will not be accepted.*

What is this “3:00 PM the day before we cover the material” deadline all about?

*Anyone turning in their problem set by 3:00 PM the day before we cover the material in class will be awarded three (3) bonus points on the problem set (i.e., if we cover a problem set in class on Monday, turned in before 3:00 PM the preceding Sunday; problem sets covered in class on Wednesday turned in by 3:00 PM Tuesday; problem sets covered in class on Friday turned in by 3:00 PM Thursday). You are not required to meet this early deadline, but doing so on all ten problem sets will earn you 30 extra points over the course of the semester.*

Do I have to complete all ten of the problem sets?

*No, do not have to complete all ten problem sets; however, you will receive a grade of zero (0) for each problem set that you fail to complete on time.*

Can I drop my lowest problem set grade?

*No. As in life, the actions you take have consequences. Your scores on all ten problem sets will be counted toward your overall course grade.*

Do I have to attend class on the days problem sets are due?

*Yes, you are expected to attend class on the days problems sets are due. You are expected to be in class when we review the problem sets.*

Can’t I just turn in the problem set via e-mail or drop it off and leave?

*No, you cannot turn the problem set in via e-mail or drop it off in class and leave. The material we cover on that day is as important as the material we cover any other day. It is not a “day off.”*

Can I e-mail my completed problem set to Dr. Ulbig?

*No. Dr. Ulbig is not your personal secretary and will not print out, collate, and bring your completed problem set to class for you. This is part of your responsibility as a student in this class.*
Can I turn in a problem set for a day that I miss class?

Most often, no, but exceptions will be made for documented absences due to medical emergencies (on the part of the student or a close family member) and absences that are caused by participation in university-sponsored activities (clubs, organizations, sports, etc.). In either case, it is the responsibility of the student to contact Dr. Ulbig as soon as possible, preferably before but no more than 24 hours after, the missed problem set in order to be eligible to turn in a problem set for a missed class.

**Final Project**

Is the Final Project a “group project”?

Sort of, but not really. There are parts of the group project that involve the whole class, but each student will be individually graded for their participation on these parts. Students will work together to develop and collected data, but each student will be graded on their contribution to this process and students are not required to work together outside of class to complete these portions of the project.

When is the Final Project due?

There are four different parts of the Final Project, and each has a different due date: Part I is due Wednesday, February 16th; Part II is due Wednesday, February 23rd; Part III is due Wednesday, March 23rd; and Part IV is due Friday, May 6th.

What do I have to do for each part of the Final Project?

Details about each part of the Final Project are posted on Blackboard, under “Final Project.”

Do I have to complete all four parts of the Final Project?

No, do not have to complete all parts of the Final Project, but you will receive a score of zero (0) for each part you do not complete by the due date.

**Final Exam**

When is the final exam?

The final exam will take place at the time and day the university indicates on the official final exam calendar, located here: [http://www.shsu.edu/students/finalexam.html](http://www.shsu.edu/students/finalexam.html). For the Spring 2011 semester, the final exam is scheduled for Wednesday, May 11th from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM.
What is the format of the final exam?

*The final exam will require you to interpret statistical output created in SPSS. The SPSS output will be provided to you (so you will not have to use SPSS during the final exam). You will be expected to read the output and answer questions about it.*

Is the final exam cumulative?

*Yes. This course is entirely cumulative – each day builds on the previous. The final exam will contain material from the entire semester.*

**Grading and Grade Reporting**

Are there any extra credit opportunities in this class?

*Yes. You may earn bonus points by turning in your completed Problem Sets early. Anyone turning in their problem set by 3:00 PM the day before we cover the material in class will be awarded three (3) bonus points on the problem set (i.e., if we cover a problem set in class on Monday, turned in before 3:00 PM the preceding Sunday; problem sets covered in class on Wednesday turned in by 3:00 PM Tuesday; problem sets covered in class on Friday turned in by 3:00 PM Thursday).*

How do I know what I made on the problem sets?

*You can learn what you made on the problem sets by attending class and picking up your graded problem sets and by looking at your grades on the course Blackboard website. Grades for problem sets will be posted within 48 hours of their due dates.*

How are the in-class assignments scored?

*The in-class assignments are not individually graded. If you are present in class when we complete them, you will receive full credit for that day’s assignments. At the end of the semester, Dr. Ulbig will calculate the number of days you attended class and your in-class assignments score will equal the percentage of class meetings that you have attended.*

I have a grade report form from my coach, sorority, fraternity, advisor, etc., can you sign it?

*Students requesting that grade report forms (for athletics or other campus organizations) be filled out immediately before or after class will need to provide a printed copy of their grade sheet from Blackboard along with the form so that Dr. Ulbig can verify grades quickly. Otherwise, students will have to speak with Dr. Ulbig during office hours or leave the form with Dr. Ulbig during one class meeting and pick it up the following class meeting.*
Do I really have to print out my grades from Blackboard - can’t I just tell Dr. Ulbig what grade I am making in this class?

Yes, you really do have to print them out. Dr. Ulbig cannot sign a form attesting to a grade she has not verified. Dr. Ulbig cannot sign a form attesting to something that she is not certain about. Please do not ask her face the potential penalties associated with doing so.

What grade do I need to make on the final exam in order to get an ‘A’ (or ‘B’ or ‘C’ or ‘to pass’)?

You should figure this out on your own. If you do not know how to calculate the weighted average that is used in this class, please seek help from a math tutor.

Can Dr. Ulbig tell me what I need to make on the final in order to get an ‘A’ (or ‘B’ or ‘C’ or ‘to pass’) in the class?

Yes. Dr. Ulbig will perform the calculation outlined above, but you will give up 40 points on your overall course grade in return for this service.

I have earned 89.9% of the points available in this class, does that mean I have earned an ‘A’ for this course?

No. Course grades are not rounded in this class. As the syllabus states, 90.0-100% earns an ‘A’ in this course. 89.9 does not equal 90.0.