POLS 3374, Section 2 (CID 80217)  
Quantitative Methods for Political Science  
Fall 2012, Online  

Dr. Stacy G. Ulbig, Ph.D.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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OFFICE HOURS

Drop-in Office Hours: TuTh 9:00 - 9:30 AM; 1:00-2:00 PM (in CHSS489)  
Wed 10:00-11:30AM (in CHSS489)  
Tuesdays 5:00-5:50 (in TWC310)  
Virtual Office: Checked M-F at 11AM (post your question here)  
By Appointment: Everyday

Course Description. This is an introduction to research design and quantitative methods (statistics) 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.

Course Objectives. Our objectives in this class include:

- Gaining factual knowledge and information regarding quantitative statistical methods.

- Learning fundamental principles and theories in the area of the statistical methods most
commonly used in the study of Political Science.

- Increasing analytical, critical thinking, and communication skills.

**Required Course Materials.** You will need the following materials for this class:

**Textbook:**

**Software:**
SPSS 20.0 (GradPack).
This is the SPSS data analysis software. While I use SPSS 17.0 for my lecture, SPSS 20.0 is the latest version and quite similar to SPSS 17.0. There should be no problem using SPSS 20.0 for this class.

SPSS 20.0 is available for rent on-line for $39.99. It will allow you to load the software on your personal computer and use it for 6 months.

[Click Here for PC Version of Software](#)

[Click here for MAC Version of Software](#)

You can also use SPSS 20.0 at any of the SHSU computer labs (in Huntsville & The Woodlands).

**Other Supplies:**
A **computer** that you have permissions to install software on.
A **webcam & microphone** for completing the final exam and communicating with Dr. Ulbig and classmates.
A basic **calculator** that has the square root function (the calculator on your computer will suffice).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Sets</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
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The **practice exercises** are graded as participation points. If you complete them on time, you will receive a grade of 100. Additionally, turning in a practice exercise on time will enable you to view the answer key to practice exercises.

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 time indicated on the Course Schedule. Late problem sets will not be accepted. You will receive a grade of zero (‘0’) for each uncompleted problem set. See FAQs 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 for more information about the final project.

The **final exam** is cumulative and will involve interpretation of statistical output. See FAQs 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:** students asking Dr. Ulbig to calculate their grade for them will be penalized 10 points on their overall course grade. See FAQs for more information about grading and grade reporting.

**Attendance Policy.** You are expected to access the course website regularly (at least every seven (7) days). It is your responsibility to check the topic, course materials, assignments, and announcements in the website. Students failing to access the course website for at least seven days, will receive a ‘warning’ for the first absence, and will lose five (5) points from their overall course grade for each additional absence of more than seven days. If you cannot access the course website for more than seven (7) days due to a serious problem, please keep Dr. Ulbig informed.

**Classroom Rules of Conduct.** Students are expected to abide by the Classroom Rules of Conduct as outlined by the Dean of Students. 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, [click here](#).

**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, [click here](#) and [here](#).

**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, [click here](#).

**Course Schedule**

**Due: September 5th: Getting Started**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, September 5th at 11:59 PM:**
- Review [Course Syllabus](#) and [Course FAQs](#)
- View Dr. Ulbig's [video introduction](#)
- Take a [tour of the course website](#)
- [Get your computer ready](#) for the semester
- Take the short [Quiz](#) about the course requirements to gain access to the course content
- Introduce yourself and meet your classmates [on this page](#)

**Due September 12: Unit 1. Conducting Empirical Research**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, September 12th at 11:59 PM:**
- [The Research Process](#) and [Practice Exercise #1](#)
- [Measurement](#) and [Practice Exercise #2](#)
- [Problem Set #1](#) and [Quiz #1](#)
Due September 19: **Unit 2. Summarizing Data, Part I**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, September 19th at 11:59 PM**:
- Introduction to SPSS
- Practice Exercise #3
- Frequencies
- Practice Exercise #4

Due September 26: **Unit 2. Summarizing Data, Part II**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, September 26th at 11:59 PM**:
- Crosstabs
- Practice Exercise #5
- Graphs & Charts
- Practice Exercise #6
- Problem Set #2
- Quiz #2

Due October 2: **Unit 11. Final Project**
Final Project, Part I Due by **Tuesday, October 2nd at 11:59 PM**

Due October 3: **Unit 3. Descriptive Statistics**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, October 3rd at 11:59 PM**:
- Measures of Central Tendency & Dispersion
- Practice Exercise #7
- Problem Set #3
- Quiz #3

Due October 10: **Unit 4. Probability**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, October 10th at 11:59 PM**:
- Probability & the Normal Curve
- Practice Exercise #8
- Z-Scores and the Normal Curve
- Practice Exercise #9
- Problem Set #4
- Quiz #4

Due October 17: **Unit 5. Hypothesis Testing**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, October 17th at 11:59 PM**:
- Confidence Intervals
- Practice Exercise #10
- One Sample t-Test
- Practice Exercise #11
- Problem Set #5
- Quiz #5

Due October 24: **Unit 6. Comparing Two Samples**
The following items are to be completed by **Wednesday, October 24th at 11:59 PM**:
- Independent Samples t-Test
- Practice Exercise #12A
- Practice Exercise #12B
Due October 31: Unit 7. Crosstabs #1
The following items are to be completed by Wednesday, October 31st at 11:59 PM:
Crosstabs & Chi-Square and Practice Exercise #14
Problem Set #7 and Quiz #7

November 7: Unit 8. Crosstabs #2
The following items are to be completed by Wednesday, November 7th at 11:59 PM:
Crosstabs & Other Measures of Association and Practice Exercise #15
Problem Set #8 and Quiz #8

Due November 14: Unit 9. Bivariate Regression
The following items are to be completed by Wednesday, November 14th at 11:59 PM:
Scatterplots & Correlations and Practice Exercise #16
Bivariate Regression and Practice Exercise #17
Problem Set #9 and Quiz #9

Due November 20: Unit 11. Final Project
Final Project, Part II Due by Tuesday, November 20th at 11:59 PM:

Due November 28: Unit 10. Multivariate Regression
The following items are to be completed by Wednesday, November 28th at 11:59 PM:
Multivariate Regression and Practice Exercise #18
Problem Set #10 and Quiz #10

Due December 4: Unit 11. Final Project
Final Project, Part III Due by Tuesday, November 4th at 11:59 PM

Due December 13: Final Exam
Complete the Final Exam by Thursday, December 13th at 11:59 PM