

## **IR6601: Research Methods in International Relations**

Term 3, 2016-2017: January 9 – March 12, 2017 3 Credit Hours

Location: Kadena AB, Education Center

Meeting Time: 1800-2100 Tuesday / Thursday

Instructor: Clifton W. Sherrill  
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### **Course Description**

An investigation of the research methodologies employed in the study of International Relations including research design, variables and hypotheses, citations and reference, qualitative analysis and quantitative techniques. *Note: MSIR candidates must achieve a grade of “B” or better in IR 6601 to complete degree program requirements.*

### **Course Objectives**

After taking this course, the student should understand the principles of scholastic research in political science. Students should be able to explain the strengths and weaknesses associated with different methods of study. Students should gain a basic understanding of regression analysis so as to interpret tables using various regression models in scholastic IR journals. Students should be able to create a sound research design, including formulating testable hypotheses, operationalizing concepts into measurable variables, and deriving defensible conclusions based on empirical data.

### **Required Texts**

- Pollock, Philip H., III. 2012. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 4th Ed. Los Angeles: Sage/CQ Press; 1608716864
- Baglione, Lisa A. 2015. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Los Angeles: Sage/CQ Press; 9781483376165

Additional assigned readings will be available electronically via TROY library databases.

### **Nature of Graduate Work**

“Graduate level work differs appreciably from that of undergraduate programs. Graduate students will find that their programs are geared toward meeting certain criteria. The first of these criteria is that the graduate student should understand the ramifications of research as well as the manner in which it is conducted. Research, the context of graduate study, is conducted in a systematic, thorough, critical, interpretative, and analytical manner—free of preconceived notions and receptive to new ideas; such research attempts to collate and synthesize new patterns of meaning, discover new truths, and correct past errors. The second component of the graduate program requires that graduate students master their field of study. Such mastery would entail a thorough grasp of the subject matter, literature in the field, theory, and methodology related to the student’s field of interest. Finally, every graduate program must give students the opportunity to demonstrate research skills, knowledge of the field, and opportunity to contribute to the field of study. Thus, a person who wishes to do graduate level work must be prepared to pass examinations, both written and oral, to write coherent papers that reflect the results of research as defined above, and to participate in course projects” (2015-16 Troy University Graduate Catalog, p. 4).

## **Course Requirements**

Students are expected to keep up with the readings and to participate in class discussion. Students should obtain a TROY e-mail account, checking it regularly as this will be the means of providing notice of assignment changes, class cancellations, or other matters outside of class. Students must also have access to a computer with Microsoft Excel, as we will use Excel to demonstrate and conduct basic regression analysis.

### *A. Exams*

There will be two exams in this course. The midterm and the final exam will each count for 20% of the course grade. Exams will include material covered in the readings and discussed in class, and will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

### *B. Homework*

There will be a series of homework assignments accounting for a total of 10% of the semester grade. Homework assignments will be provided in class. Late assignments will be assessed a 10 point penalty for each day late.

### *C. Research Design*

Students will be required to develop and draft a research design that will account for 40% of the semester grade. The research design will include traditional elements of an academic research paper, including an introduction, a thorough literature review, a detailed explanation of hypotheses, and an explanation of the operationalization and measurement of variables. Draft paper sections will be turned in during the term according to a phased schedule provided in the paper instructions at the end of this syllabus. Students will discuss their designs in class during the November class meeting. Final copies of research design papers will be due in class **March 7, 2016**. Late papers will result in lowering the paper grade by one full letter grade for each day it is late.

### *D. Attendance & Quizzes*

Regular attendance is imperative for understanding the subject as well as for maximizing your chances to succeed on the exams. By university policy, TROY's coordinator must be notified of students who miss more than 25% of classes. Attendance will be taken in compliance with College policy. There will be a series of in-class quizzes accounting for a total of 10% of the semester grade. Quizzes, covering the daily reading assignments, will not be announced in advance.

## **Grading Policy**

90 - 100 A	70 - 79 C	0 - 59 F
80 - 89 B	60 - 69 D	

*Incomplete grades:* If a student is unable to complete all course grading requirements, the student may be eligible to request the assignment of an incomplete grade. An Incomplete grade is not automatically assigned by the instructor, but must be requested by the student and approved by the instructor. The decision to approve or reject a student's request for an incomplete grade is at the discretion of the instructor using the following criteria: Student submits a completed "Incomplete Grade Request" form prior to assignment of a course grade. Student's progress in the course is deemed satisfactory. Student is passing the course when the request is made. The circumstances that prevented the student's completion of course requirements are beyond the student's control and adequate documentation is provided. A student may request an incomplete by completing and

submitting to the instructor an “Incomplete Grade Request” form. This form can be found at [www.troy.edu/graduateschool/forms.html](http://www.troy.edu/graduateschool/forms.html).

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Troy University supports Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which insure that post-secondary students with disabilities have equal access to all academic programs, physical access to all buildings, facilities and events, and are not discriminated against on the basis of disability. Eligible students, with appropriate documentation, will be provided equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic skills and potential through the provision of academic adaptations and reasonable accommodations. Further information, including appropriate contact information, can be found at the following link:

[http://trojan.troy.edu/etroy/documents/Troy\\_University\\_ADA\\_Policies.pdf](http://trojan.troy.edu/etroy/documents/Troy_University_ADA_Policies.pdf)

### **Academic Honesty**

By their enrollment, students are responsible for following the “Standards of Conduct” as they apply in the Troy University Pacific Region. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with these guidelines and to comply therewith.

Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words or ideas without proper attribution; whether intentional or not, representing another person’s words or ideas as one’s own constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is an ethical offense violating Troy’s Standards of Conduct and Troy’s Academic Code. All MSIR students are expected to understand the concept of plagiarism as well as the rules of proper citation. If a student has any doubt about proper attribution, it is the responsibility of the student to seek clarification from the instructor. Students deemed by the instructor to have engaged in intentional plagiarism in this course shall receive an automatic F in the class and are subject to additional discipline up to and including expulsion from the program. Students deemed by the instructor to have engaged in unintentional plagiarism are subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the instructor in accordance with the severity of the offense. The instructor uses on-line software to help detect plagiarism. Please note that no assignment prepared for or submitted in a different course may be used in this course without prior approval of the instructor.

### **Library Resources**

Students can access online information resources through Troy Library Services home page at <http://trojan.troy.edu/library/> These resources include a variety of full text databases that provide complete article texts from thousands of journals, magazines and newspapers. Among the most helpful databases are JSTOR, Academic Search Complete, and Lexis-Nexis. Remote access is available via the student’s Troy User ID and Password. Specific help for Global Campus students, including a dedicated librarian, is available at:

[http://trojan.troy.edu/library/globalcampus/gc\\_librarian.html](http://trojan.troy.edu/library/globalcampus/gc_librarian.html)

### **Course Schedule**

*Week 1: Course Introduction; Scientific Research*

Class will not meet Tuesday 1/10 or Thursday 1/12 due to instructor unavailability, however students are to complete the following reading:

- Text, Introduction
- Baglione, Ch. 1-4
- King, Keohane & Verba, “The Science in Social Science,” Ch. 1 in *Designing Social Inquiry*. Available at <<http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s5458.pdf>>
- Hedley Bull, “International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach,” *World Politics* 18, no. 3 (April 1966): 361-377. Available in JSTOR.
- Michael W. Mosser, “Puzzles versus Problems: The Alleged Disconnect between Academics and Military Practitioners.” *Perspectives on Politics* 8, no. 4 (December 2010): 1077-1086. Available online via Google search.

### Week 2

#### Tuesday 1/17 Scientific Research; Theories & Hypotheses

- Text, Chapters 1-3
- Baglione, Ch. 5

#### Thursday 1/19 Theories & Hypotheses

- John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “Leaving Theory Behind: Why Simplistic Hypothesis Testing Is Bad for International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 427-457. Available in Sage database.

### Week 3

#### Tuesday 1/24 Operationalization & Measurement

- Text, Chapter 4

#### Thursday 1/26 Research Design

- Text, Chapter 5
- Baglione, Ch. 7

### Week 4

#### Tuesday 1/31 Experiments

- Rose McDermott, “Experimental Methods in Political Science,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002): 31-61.

#### Thursday 2/2 Case Studies

- John Gerring, “What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?” *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 2 (2004): 341-354. Available in JSTOR.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman, “Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield,” *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007): 170-195. Available in Sage database.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman, “Complex Causal Relations and Case Study Methods: The Example of Path Dependence” *Political Analysis* 14, no. 3 (2006): 250-267. Available in JSTOR.

*Week 5*

*Tuesday 2/7* Content Analysis; Process Tracing; Counterfactuals

- Trong R. Chai, "A Content Analysis of the Obituary Notices on Mao Tse-Tung," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (Winter, 1977-78): 475-87. Available in JSTOR.
- David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44, no. 4 (2011): 823-830.
- James D. Fearon, "Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science," *World Politics* 43, no. 2 (Jan. 1991): 169-195.

*For those particularly interested in interviewing, see the symposium articles on interviewing published in PS: Political Science and Politics 35, no. 4 (2005): 663-688*

*Thursday 2/9* **MIDTERM EXAM**

*Week 6*

*Tuesday 2/14* Bivariate Analysis

- Text, Chapter 6.
- Baglione, Ch. 8

*Thursday 2/16* Multivariate Analysis

- Text, Chapter 7

*Week 7*

*Tuesday 2/21* Multivariate Analysis

- Text, Chapter 8

*Thursday 2/23* Student Design Presentations

*Week 8*

*Tuesday 2/28* Presentations; Logit & Probit

- Text, Chapter 9
- Baglione, Ch. 9

*Thursday 3/2* Formal Models & Rational Choice

- Duncan Snidal, "Formal Models of International Politics," 242-283 in Sprinz and Wolinsky, Cases, Numbers, Models: IR Research Methods (2002). Available at [http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/trachtenberg/syllabi/lists/harvard/moravcsik%20\(sprinz%20wolinsky\).pdf](http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/trachtenberg/syllabi/lists/harvard/moravcsik%20(sprinz%20wolinsky).pdf)
- D. Marc Kilgour and Yael Wolinsky, "Game Theory and International Environmental Policy," 339-369 in Sprinz and Wolinsky, Cases, Numbers, Models: IR Research Methods (2002)

*Week 9*

*Tuesday 3/7* **FINAL RESEARCH DESIGN PAPERS DUE IN CLASS**

- *Review*

*Thursday 3/9* **FINAL EXAM**

Note: The above schedule, readings and procedures in this course are subject to change.

**IR6601: Research Methods in International Relations**  
**Term 3, 2016-17**

**Research Design Instructions**

Per catalog requirements, a research design is required in this course. This research design will account for 40% of the semester grade. Final copies of the paper will be due in class **March 7, 2016**. Papers turned in after class ends will be considered late. Late papers will result in lowering the paper grade by one full letter grade for each 24 hour period it is late. This policy will be strictly enforced in order to have sufficient time for design review and grading prior to the end of the term.

The primary purpose of this paper is to provide students with experience using scholastic conventions in research methodology and writing.

For the paper, students will select a topic dealing with some aspect of international relations. Students must obtain the approval of the instructor as to the topic. While broad discretion will be granted, students should take care to choose a topic about which appropriate data would be available. Data is often difficult to obtain, so think this through when choosing a topic.

Students will work on the papers over the entire course of the term. To that end, we will follow a phased schedule of assignments, as reflected below:

- Thursday 1/19: Research topic due. (5 points)
- Thursday 1/26: One-page research plan due. Identify specific research question; provide specific testable hypotheses. (5 points)
- Tuesday 2/14: Draft research design due in class, including theory, hypotheses, concepts of interest (variables), and how the variables will be operationalized and measured. (10 points)
- Thursday 2/23: Presentation; draft paper due. (10 points)
- Tuesday 3/7: Final paper due in class. (70 points)

*Format:* The paper must be typed, double-spaced, in twelve-point Times New Roman font, with one inch margins. Do not place additional space between paragraphs. Use of headings and subheadings within the paper is recommended. Papers are anticipated to be approximately 10-12 pages in length, exclusive of title page, bibliography, and notes. Please note that quality is more important than volume. Different research designs will result in different lengths of paper.

*Citation and Sources:* You may use whichever citation format you are most familiar with; however, if I am not familiar with the system you choose, you must provide me with a system manual upon my request. Proper citation requires sufficient information for me to check your sources with ease. Internet sources may and should be used; however, not all Internet sites are

equal. Common sense should help tell you which websites are acceptable and which are not for academic work. If in doubt, it is best to avoid that site. Of course, you may always ask me for an opinion as to suitability. Citation of Internet sources requires more than simply listing the website. Include titles, authors, dates written, and dates accessed. Papers citing Wikipedia will be docked 5 points. Students should consult books, periodicals, newspapers, policy papers, and government documents as well as on-line sources to ensure proper breadth of research. A bibliography must be included with the paper.

*Grading:* Papers will be graded on demonstrated understanding, thoroughness, and integration of research into a coherent presentation. Poor spelling, grammar, punctuation or style will negatively affect the grade. Please note the specific points allocated to each phased assignment of the paper.

**PLEASE PROOFREAD.**