

Research Practicum in International Relations
Government 355M
Unique Number: 38690
Friday 3pm-6pm, room CLA 0.124
Spring 2017

Instructor: Calla Hummel
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Course Description:

This course is the second semester of a capstone course in social science research that focuses on emerging questions in International Relations. In this class, students learn how to take a project from an idea to a fully developed research paper. Students will conduct original research and write up results as a research article in this second semester course. Lectures address different empirical strategies, such as case studies and regression, as well as issues that arise in the course of research. In the second semester, half of the class sessions will be lectures on research design and strategies, and the other half will be hands-on writing and research workshops.

Note: Students may join the class in the second semester. However, to catch up with the rest of the class they must 1) read chapters 1-4 of the textbook by the first day of class; 2) come to office hours in the first week to discuss their project; and 3) turn in a 3-page paper introducing a clear research question, dependent variable, independent variable, unit of analysis, likely case study, and data source by the second class.

Textbook (required):

Kellstedt, Paul, and Guy Whitten. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. (or 2008 edition)

Readings:

Any supplementary readings will be available for free online through links in the syllabus and Canvas. A subscription to a high quality daily newspaper like the New York Times is highly recommended (student subscriptions start at \$2 a week:
<http://www.nytimes.com/subscriptions/edu/lp1474.html?campaignId=48U9F>).

Students are expected to find and read at least one published research article related to their project every week.

Evaluation:

Evaluation occurs throughout the semester through written assignments that build up to the full research article. Additionally, students will be graded on class participation and their final project. Every assignment is worth points and grades are out of 100 possible points:

- Class Participation (10%): Every student is expected to show up to every class

prepared to discuss their project, others' projects, and the readings. Five times in the semester, students will be randomly paired with a classmate and expected to read each other's drafts and come to class prepared with comments.

- Literature Review Summaries (10%): Students must read at least one article or book related to their project each week and submit a one paragraph summary of that article or book for the first ten weeks. Each summary is worth 1 point.
- Paper Section Drafts (25%): Students submit a new section draft of their final paper five times during the semester. Each draft is worth 5 points and there are 5 sections (introduction, literature review, theory, research design, and results), for a total of 25 points.
- Final Paper (25%): Students submit a final research paper on the last day of class. The paper should consist of the five (revised) paper sections plus a conclusion and be 15-25 pages, double-spaced (not including the bibliography).
- Research Assignments (25%): IPD directors and TTLs will assign students tasks throughout the semester. Every fifth week, students should submit a one page written report via email to the instructor, copying their TTL(s). Reports should detail the student's completed work and IPD contributions.
- Presentation (5%): Students present their project to the class in one of the last class sessions. Presentations should be in the style of professional conferences: 10 minutes, with PowerPoint slides or similar visual aids, followed by 10-15 minutes of questions and discussion.
- EXTRA CREDIT (five points or 5%): Students can present their project in poster form at the Longhorn Research Bazaar on Wednesday, April 19th or the Government Department Research Symposium (date TBD, but usually late April). For deadlines and requirements, see: <http://ugs.utexas.edu/researchweek>

There are no make up papers or tests. Papers are due in print at the beginning of class on the due date and late papers will be docked 20% for every day late.

Grades:

At the end of the semester, the instructor will convert points to a letter grade on the following scale:

93-100 = A

90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-
67-69 = D+
63-66 = D
60-62 = D-
59 or less = F

Grade disputes:

If a student believes a grade was issued in error, they must submit an explanation of the error in writing within two days of receiving a graded assignment. The student must then meet with the instructor to discuss the problem. If the instructor agrees to re-grade the assignment, the new, final grade may be higher or lower than the original.

Papers:

All papers must be double-spaced, 12 point font, with one inch margins, black ink, and in Times New Roman, Arial, or Cambria font.

Expectations:

- Absolutely no phones, recording devices, or other electronics during class.
- I do not post lecture notes or slides. You are expected to take thorough notes.
- Show up to class on time and do not pack up or leave until class is over.
- Do the reading before the class.
- Come to every class. Students are graded on class participation.

Religious holidays and other excused absences:

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least **fourteen days** prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day or other permitted absence. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day or other permitted absence, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within 7 days after the absence.

Students with disabilities:

If you have a disability, please let me know and I will work with you. Contact the university for accommodations as soon as possible, so that we can get everything set up. If you have not done this before, I am happy to help. Students with disabilities can request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Honor Code:

I will fail you if you plagiarize.

University policy: The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and

community. Any work that is not the student's own and not attributed to others constitutes plagiarism. Instances of student plagiarism are grounds for failure and more serious academic penalties.

Schedule

Week 1 (January 20th): What are the elements of a research article?

- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- Students joining the class are also required to read chapters 1-4 of the textbook before class and visit the instructor in office hours to discuss a project prospectus.

Week 2 (January 27th): Writing an introduction

- DUE JANUARY 25TH ON CANVAS: A one to two page introduction to your research paper. Each student will be randomly paired with another student and expected to thoroughly read the other's introduction and give feedback on it in class.
- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- Students joining the class: instead of an introduction, submit a 3-page project prospectus introducing a clear research question, dependent variable, independent variable, unit of analysis, likely case study, and data source.

Week 3 (February 3rd): Research design review

- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- Read: Chapter 12 of the textbook

Week 4 (February 10th): Writing a literature review

- DUE FEBRUARY 8TH ON CANVAS: A two-three page literature review. Each student will be randomly paired with another student and expected to thoroughly read the other's introduction and give feedback on it in class.
- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- LAST DAY TO CHANGE YOUR RESEARCH TOPIC.

Week 5 (February 17th): What is (and what isn't) theory

- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- DUE: IPD Report #1
- Reading: Chapter 2 of the textbook

Week 6 (February 24th): Theory in political science

- DUE FEBRUARY 22nd ON CANVAS: A two-three page theory section draft. Each student will be randomly paired with another student and expected to thoroughly read the other's introduction and give feedback on it in class.
- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.

Week 7 (March 3rd): Arc-GIS Workshop (Guest lecture by Daniela Hernandez, IPD Project Manager)

- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- DUE: abstract for students doing the Longhorn Research Bazaar.

Week 8 (March 10th): What is a good case study?

- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.

Week 9 (March 17th): Spring Break

No class

Week 10 (March 24th): How to write a research design

- DUE MARCH 22ND ON CANVAS: A one-three page research design section draft. Each student will be randomly paired with another student and expected to thoroughly read the other's introduction and give feedback on it in class.
- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- DUE: IPD Report #2

Week 11 (March 31st): Topics in research #1: What is endogeneity and how do you address it?

- DUE: one paragraph summary of an article or book related to your project.
- Readings: supplementary reading posted to Canvas
- DUE: poster .pdf files for students presenting at the Longhorn Research Bazaar

Week 12 (April 7th): Topics in research #2: Variation over time (subject to change depending on class research designs)

- Readings: Chapter 11 of the textbook, start at 11.3

Week 13 (April 14th): Topics in research #3: Using quantitative data in case studies (subject to change depending on class research designs)

- Readings: supplementary reading posted to Canvas

Week 14 (April 21st): Writing up your results

- DUE APRIL 19TH ON CANVAS: A three-five page results section draft.

Each student will be randomly paired with another student and expected to thoroughly read the other's introduction and give feedback on it in class.

Week 15 (April 28th): Presentations

- DUE: IPD Report #3

Week 16 (May 5th): Presentations

- DUE: Final draft