

Political Science 201
Spring Semester 2009
Hall of States
Tuesday 6 -8

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Course Objectives

The primary objective of this class is to make students informed consumers of empirical research. During the course of the semester we will cover philosophy of science, research design, measurement and data collection, and introductory descriptive and inferential statistics. In terms of the statistical component, no formal mathematics training beyond high school algebra is expected. It is not my intention to train you as statisticians, but to give you a basic grounding in issues of sampling, conceptualization and measurement, experimental research designs, quasi-experimental research designs, correlational research designs, data collection methods, and basic issues in statistics.

If you have a background in research methods and statistics there is a test-out exam available in the GSPM. If you have completed a graduate level research methods class and earned at least a "B" you should not be in this class. It will be waived.

There are two texts available in the GW bookstore:

Chava Frankfort-Nachmias and David Nachmias, Research Methods in the Social Sciences

Herbert Asher, Polling and the Public

Additional readings will be available on Blackboard.

Grades will be determined on the following basis:

40% Exam I

40% Exam II

20% Homework Assignments

The exams will be in-class, closed book exams. Both exams will consist of two parts. Part one will be short answer definitions and discussion questions. Part two will consist of computational exercises. You may use one page of formulae and/or notes for part two of both exams. The second exam will not be cumulative. I will distribute

study guides before each exam.

Homework assignments will include simple exercises applying the concepts we discuss in class.

CLASS POLICIES

While I do not take attendance, I operate on the assumption that you have heard all announcements made in class with respect to assignments and/or changes in schedule.

Class attendance and participation will be taken into account in determining final grades “on the margin.” You do not need to contact me if you will not be in class. You do need to contact a classmate for class notes, handouts, and announcements.

I do not give extra credit assignments.

Each assignment will have a specified due date. No assignment will be accepted for credit if it is submitted more than one week late except in the event of extenuating circumstances. **Please do not send assignments as e-mail attachments.**

You will need an inexpensive calculator for the mid term and the final. You may not use your cell phone, an IPOD, or a PDA on the exams. Also, cell phones must be turned off in class.

I expect you will complete your own original work for this class. Do not submit for credit any work completed by another individual or submitted for credit in another class. All examinations and assignments are to be completed in conformance with the University’s Code of Academic Integrity. The Academic Integrity code can be found at <http://www.gwu.edu/~integrity/code.html>

If you are having a problem with either the readings or the class assignments please inform me when the problem arises, i.e., do not wait until the day of the exam. My office and home phone numbers and my E-mail address are at the top of the syllabus. Please feel free to contact me when the need arises. (Please do not call my home number after 10:00 pm).

In the event of inclement weather on any Wednesday during the semester, please contact me before coming to campus.

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to:

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>

If you are registered with DSS and will be taking your exams in the DSS office please inform me.

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE OUTLINE

Jan. 13	No Class
Jan. 20	No Class GW is closed for the Inauguration
Jan. 27	Introduction Brief Overview Science as Method Issues in Logic Conceptual Foundations of Research Nachmias & Nachmias Chapters 1, 2, and 3
Feb. 3	Measurement Sampling Nachmias and Nachmias Chapters 7 and 8 Asher Chapter 4
Feb. 10	Complete Measurement and Sampling
Feb. 17	Generalization and Explanation: Experimental, Correlational and Quasi-experimental Designs Nachmias and Nachmias Chapters 5 and 6
Feb. 24	Univariate Descriptive Statistics Standard Normal Curve Nachmias and Nachmias Chapter 15 Blalock: <u>Social Statistics</u> , Chapter 7
Mar 3	Bivariate Description: Contingency Tables for Nominal and Ordinal Variables Nachmias and Nachmias Chapter 16 White: <u>Political Analysis</u> , Chapter 11 pages 305-324
Mar 11	Review for Exam I

- Mar 17 Spring Break
Happy St. Patrick's Day!
- Mar 24 Exam I
- Mar 31 Bivariate Description: Linear Regression
Multivariate Analysis
Statistical Inference
- Nachmias and Nahmias Chapter 16
White: Political Analysis, Chapter 11
pages 324-332
Blalock: Social Statistics, Chapter 8
White: Political Analysis, Chapter 12
- Apr. 7 Complete Inference
Confidence Intervals
- Apr. 14 Survey Research: Mechanics of Public Opinion Polling, Polling
and the Democratic Process
- Nachmias and Nachmias Chapters 10 and 11
Asher: Entire
- Apr. 21 Complete Polling
Secondary Analysis, Focus Groups, Content Analysis, Ethics in
Research
Review for final
- Nachmias and Nachmias Chapters 4 and 13
- Apr. 28 Exam II (Tentative date)