Analytical Methods for Global Policy Studies
PA 397G (61260)
Fall, 2010
Meets Th 9:00-12:00 in SRH 3.122

Instructors: Dr. Jennifer Bussell  Dr. Chandler Stolp
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Office hours: Tu 2:00-4:00  Th 12:00-1:00, F 10:00-11:00
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Analytical Methods for Global Policy Studies introduces the core quantitative and qualitative methods used by global policy professionals. Students will learn the links between theory, evidence, and professional practice; research design; the difference between systematic research and anecdotal evidence; the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research methods, important strategies for analysis, inference, and interpretation, including case studies and regression; and key sources and methods for data collection.

Format

Most classes will begin with a presentation by one or both of the professors. We encourage students to participate throughout by asking questions, and most meetings will flow into discussion at some stage.

In addition to their official office hours, Professors Bussell and Stolp will be available to meet students by appointment. Please set up appointments by email. They will also gladly answer e-mailed questions.

Your classmates are a great resource. Everyone should be sure to turn in his or her own work, but study groups can be very useful to discuss concepts and examples and to talk about how to approach problem sets. Trying to explain a concept to a colleague is a great way to learn it.

Grading

We have scheduled one one-hour exam during the semester, worth 30% of your final grade; the midterm exam is scheduled outside of regular class time on Friday, October 8. We have also scheduled a final exam during exam week, worth 40% of your final grade. Your homework will account for 20% of your final grade. The remaining 10% of your grade will be based on the quality of your participation in class discussions.

We expect students to do the readings before each class meeting so that you are prepared to follow the lectures and to participate in the discussions. Homework assignments are due at the beginning of class.
Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses. If we catch you violating the principles of academic honesty, we will enforce the strongest punishments possible under the LBJ School's policies. Please refer to the official policies for further details.

University Electronic Mail Notification Policy

We will use e-mail as a means of communication with students in this course. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. The University of Texas recommends that you check e-mail daily, and requires you to check at least twice per week. Each student is responsible for keeping the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html.

About Blackboard

You will be responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements. The university's IT staff occasionally schedules downtimes for the Blackboard site, as they do for all computer systems. Notification of these disruptions will be posted on the Blackboard login page. Scheduled downtimes are not an excuse for late work. Blackboard is also occasionally subject to unanticipated disruptions. We will adjust your grade if a significant unanticipated disruption interrupts your ability to submit an assignment on time.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

Reading Assignments

The Coop East bookstore is stocking two textbooks for this class:


Note: the Brady & Collier volume will not be available until September, so we will post readings from this book for earlier classes on Blackboard. We will also post other readings to the course Blackboard site.
Class 1 (8/26) – Answering Questions with Theory and Variables

Van Evera, pp. 7-27.

Class 2 (9/2) – Predictions and Tests

King, Keohane, and Verba, pp. 46-49.

Class 3 (9/9) – Research Design and Inference


Class 4 (9/16) – Data Gathering I: Interviews

Class 5 (9/23) – Data Gathering II: Texts and Archives


Class 6 (9/30) – Case Study Analysis

Van Evera, pp. 67-88.

Class 7 (10/7) – Data Gathering III: Surveys and Large-N Databases

Surveys

Databases

Class 8 (10/14) – Experiments and Natural Experiments

D. Campbell and J. Stanley. 1963. Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research (skim for highlights)


Other recommended reading:

Class 9 (10/21) – From Descriptive Statistics to Inferential Statistics


Class 10 (10/28) – Testing Means and Differences in Means


Class 11 (11/4) – The Two-Variable Linear Regression Model

Thomas Wonnacott & Ronald Wonnacott (1990), Introductory Statistics for Business and Economics, NY: John Wiley and Sons, Chs 11-12


**Class 12 (11/11) – The Multiple Linear Regression Model**


**Class 13 (11/18) – Extensions to Linear Regression**


**Class 14 (12/2) – Combining Methods**

[Readings to be Announced]