

# Junior Honors Seminar

## Political Science 195

### Spring 2009

### Syllabus

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Office: 3715 Ellison  
Office hours: T 2:00–4:00 p.m. or by appointment  
Class meeting time: W 3:30–6:20 p.m.  
Class location: 3814 Ellison

## 1 Course Objectives

This course is a seminar open to students with junior standing who have been invited to participate in the honors program of the political science department. It is the first in a four quarter sequence leading to the production of a honors thesis. There are three objectives. First, to introduce students to the process of conducting research in political science. More specifically, the course aims to familiarize students with the process of conducting a larger-scale research project than the typical research paper students may be accustomed to writing for upper division courses in political science. Second and closely related to the first, to prepare students for writing a thesis in their senior year by identifying a research question to investigate and potential hypotheses to test, as well as by developing a research design. Students will also find an advisor whose research interests match theirs. Third, to provide students with a flavor of the intensive and more interactive learning characteristic of graduate level instruction.

## 2 Course and Contact Information

The best way to contact me is either to come to my office hours or to send me an e-mail.

- *Office Hours:* I encourage you to stop by early in the quarter so that you can get to know me and vice versa. Don't, in other words, feel shy about coming to see me, whether you just want to chat about the weather or have more substantive course-related issues to discuss.
- *E-mail:* I will respond within twenty-four hours to e-mails that I receive during business hours on Mondays through Thursdays (I rarely check e-mail in the evenings). I will try to answer e-mails received prior to mid-afternoon on Friday by 5:00 p.m. but may not manage to respond until Monday.

There is a class website through which all readings except for the textbook are available (described below).

## 3 Requirements

Unlike the typical lecture format of most undergraduate classes, the seminar format of this class requires you to actively participate in group discussions and to occasionally make brief presenta-

tions. Accordingly, regular attendance and class participation are required and together count for a quarter of the class grade. Other requirements are three short papers over the course of the quarter. The first two will be approximately 6–8 pages in length; their goal is to get you started with developing different aspects of a thesis project. The third assignment will be approximately 8–10 pages and will constitute a draft research proposal for your thesis, which is likely where you will pick up in the fall of your senior year should you decide to continue with the honors program. There are no exams and no traditional research paper. Hence, in sum, grades for the class will be calculated as follows:

- Participation: 25%.
- First assignment: 20%. Due by noon on 28 April.
- Second assignment: 20%. Due by noon on 20 May.
- Third assignment: 35%. Due by noon on 12 June.

All assignments, including the third and final assignment, are due by noon. For the first two assignments, you may submit the assignment to me via e-mail by noon, but you should then give me a hard copy in class; however, the third assignment must be handed in in hard copy by noon. I will also ask you to share your first assignment with three or four other students (to be determined) via e-mail by noon on the due date, who then have the responsibility of reading the assignment prior to class and coming to class prepared to offer constructive criticism. Note that no late assignments will be accepted without documentation. Extensions should be arranged at least twenty-four hours in advance. Of course, assignments may always be handed in early.

## 4 Required Reading Materials

There is one required text for the course. I have ordered it through the bookstore, but it can be purchased for far less (particularly by purchasing a used copy of the prior edition) via an online vendor such as Barnes and Noble ([www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)) or Amazon ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)). It is:

Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H. T. Reynolds (with Jason D. Mycoff). 2008. *Political Science Research Methods*, 6th Ed. Also acceptable is the 5th edition from 2005.

This text is henceforth referred to as JR. Equivalent chapters and page numbers from the 5th edition are shown in brackets.

Other reading materials that appear on the syllabus can be obtained from the class website that I have set up on Google Sites (<http://sites.google.com/site/ps195spr09/>). I will give you access to the site using the e-mail address you provide on the first day of class (you'll receive an e-mail from me inviting you to view the site, along with instructions for doing so). Note that you will need either to be on a university computer or to have configured your home computer to use the UCSB proxy server to access many of these readings.

As we will discuss in class, you are also expected to do a fair amount of reading on your own to explore the literature on your potential topic of interest. Hence, the assigned reading load is lighter than you may be accustomed to seeing for an upper division political science course, particularly in the second half of the quarter.

## 5 Schedule

### 1 April: Introduction

JR, Chapter 1.

### 8 April: The Science in Political Science

JR, Chapter 2.

Feynman, Richard. 1992. "Cargo Cult Science." In *Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman! Adventures of a Curious Character*. London: Vintage. p. 338–346.

Przeworski, Adam and Henry Teune. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: Wiley Interscience. Chapter 1.

Crichton, Michael. 2003. "Aliens Cause Global Warming." Speech at the California Institute of Technology, 17 January.

Dean, Cornelia. 2006. "When Questions of Science Come to a Courtroom, Truth Has Many Faces." *The New York Times*, 5 December.

*Event: Conversations with current senior honors students.*

### 15 April: From a Topic to a Hypothesis

JR, Chapter 6, p. 183–187 [Chapter 5, p. 130–131], and Chapter 3 [Chapter 4].

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1, p. 3–23, and Chapter 3, p. 99–114.

Walt, Stephen M. 1998. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." *Foreign Policy* 110 (Spring): 29–46.

Laitin, David. 2000. "Comparative Politics: The State of the Subdiscipline." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association.

### 22 April: Measurement and Research Design Overview

JR, Chapter 4, through p. 110, and Chapter 5 [Chapter 3].

Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review*: 682–693.

McDermott, Rose. 2002. "Experimental Methods in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 5: 31–61.

Lim, Timothy. 2006. *Doing Comparative Politics: An Introduction to Approaches and Issues*. Chapter 6, p. 157–163.

Gross, Daniel. 2008. "Landslide! Why Are There So Many Natural Disasters During Presidential Election Years?" *Slate*. 29 February.

### 29 April: Case Studies I and Student Presentations

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 and 5.

Tarrow, Sidney. 1996. "Making Social Science Work Across Space and Time: A Critical Reflection on Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work*." *American Political Science Review* 90 (2): 389–397.

*Note: First assignment due the prior day.*

**6 May: Library Resources, Literature Reviews and Case Studies II**

JR, Chapter 6, p. 187–207 [Chapter 5, p. 131–152].

Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia & China*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, p. 33–43, and Conclusion, p. 284–293.

Geddes, Barbara. 1990. “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics.” *Political Analysis* 2 (1): 131–150.

*Event: Tutorial on library resources with Richard Caldwell, political science librarian. Meet in Library Instruction Room 1575 at 3:30.*

**13 May: Surveys, Interviews and the Written Record**

Bruhn, Kathleen and Kenneth F. Greene. 2007. “Elite Polarization Meets Mass Moderation in Mexico’s 2006 Elections.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40 (1): 27–32.

Fox, Richard and Eric R. A. N. Smith. 1998. “The Role of Candidate Sex in Voter Decision-Making.” *Political Psychology* 19 (2): 405–419.

*Event: Conversations about research with faculty.*

**20 May: Experiments and Quasi-Experiments**

Baumgartner, Jody and Jonathan S. Morris. 2006. “The Daily Show Effect: Candidate Evaluations, Efficacy, and American Youth.” *American Politics Research* 34 (3): 341–367.

Campbell, Donald T. and H. Laurence Ross. 1968. “The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding: Time-Series Data in Quasi-Experimental Analysis.” *Law and Society Review* 3 (1): 33–54.

*Event: Conversations about research with faculty.*

*Note: Second assignment due.*

**27 May: Student Presentations**

**3 June: Student Presentations**