Junior Honors Seminar  
Political Science 195  
Spring 2012  
Syllabus

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Office: 3715 Ellison  
Office hours: TH 3:30–5:30 p.m. or by appointment  
Class meeting time: F 9:00–11:50 a.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, and more specifically, to 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.

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 presentations. 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 10–15 pages in length 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: 10%. Due by 5:00 p.m. by e-mail on 2 May; please also bring a hard copy to class on 4 May.
- Second assignment: 10%. Due in class in hard copy on 25 May.
- Third assignment: 55%. Due by noon on 14 June in my mailbox in hard copy.

I will also ask you to share your first assignment with several other students (to be determined) via e-mail by the due date and time, 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 are no required texts for the course. Most of the readings that appear on the syllabus are available as a reader from The Alternative in IV. The reader may be ordered online from www.alternativecopy.com using the username “ucsbpols195” and the password “stoll3”. For copyright reasons, there are unfortunately a few readings that are only available from the library’s Electronic Reserves Service. I have noted which these are on the schedule below. These readings can be obtained electronically from http://eres.library.ucsb.edu/ using the password supplied in class.

For those of you who have not yet taken Political Science 104, you may benefit from some additional background reading. A good text for this is:


It can be purchased from many online vendors. The syllabus will list the chapters from this text that correspond to the week’s topic (listed as “JR”); these chapters are accordingly recommended reading for those looking for additional background. Equivalent chapters and page numbers from the 5th edition of this text are shown in brackets.

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(s) of interest. This is why 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 and Readings

6 April: Introduction.

13 April: From a Topic to a Hypothesis


Recommended reading: JR, Chapters 1–2, Chapter 6, p. 183–187 [Chapter 5, p. 130–131], and Chapter 3 [Chapter 4].

Event: Conversation with current senior honors students.

20 April: Measurement and Research Design Through Examples I


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

27 April: Measurement and Research Design Through Examples II


4 May: Student Presentations
Assignments of your colleagues (TBA).

Note: First assignment due two days prior (by 5:00 p.m. on 2 May).

11 May: Student Presentations, Literature Reviews and Sample Prospectuses
JR, Chapter 6, p. 187–207.
Sample prospectuses.

18 May: Library Resources and Gathering Data


Event: Tutorial on library resources with Chris Granatino, government publications librarian, and data and literature gathering exercise, Library Instruction Room 1575 at 9:00 a.m.

25 May: Doing Research
Recommended reading: skim parts of JR, Chapters 8–10, as relevant to your project.

Event: Conversations about research with faculty, senior honors students (TBA).

Note: Second assignment due.

1 June: Student Presentations

8 June: Student Presentations

Event: Conversation about the senior honors program with Professor Bruce Bimber.