Purpose

PS130 is intended as an introduction to the systematic study of politics as a social science. It is organized around major questions for the study of domestic politics and/or international relations and the key challenges that arise in trying to answer them. So we examine issues such as polarization in U.S. politics, the relationship between inequality and democracy, the security dilemma in international relations, efforts to foster free and fair elections in new or struggling democracies, and innovations in global governance.

Debates over these topics often turn on differences in how to conceptualize something as ubiquitous as power, how to measure a core concept such as democracy, or how to gather and summarize basic information about the phenomenon in question. We will learn a number of useful tools for such descriptive inferences, which will put you in a stronger position to distinguish rhetorical flourishes from meaningful differences in election forecasts, political parties' policy positions, cross-national measures of political institutions, etc.

We then move from asking descriptive questions to asking more analytical ones, such as: Why do some get-out-the-vote efforts increase voter turnout when others do not? Does it matter—for local public policy or inter-state militarized conflicts—whether policymakers are women or men? Why do policies for AIDS prevention and treatment differ so much across countries? Why is public policy more responsive to the interests of some groups than others?

Political scientists seek to answer such questions by developing positive (as opposed to normative) theories of political phenomena and conducting empirical analyses to assess those explanations. In examining prominent answers to these and similar important questions, we will focus on key problems of causal inference in social analysis and examine how political scientists deal with those problems. The course thus offers an introduction to a broad range of methods used in empirical inquiry in political science, including the assumptions underpinning those methods.

As taught in Spring 2014, PS130 is intended as a true introductory course. Students are not expected (i.e., not required) to have taken previous courses in Political Science, nor does the course have any prerequisites in math, statistics, or methods—though I do expect familiarity with standard high school algebra and a willingness to use it.
Requirements

The required readings and lectures for this course are complements, not substitutes. We will cover a lot of material in lectures and in sections that is not in the required readings. Attendance—and active participation—is therefore crucial (including the ability to listen to, and constructively engage with, your peers).

Your grade will be based on class participation (30%), four short assignments (40%), and a final exam (30%). The participation grade will be based on participation in both lectures and sections, including performance on regular single- or multi-question quizzes in class, for which we will use i>clickers (see below). I will allow (after the first full week of classes), up to 4 absences from lecture and 2 absences from section, excused or unexcused; participation will be downgraded for additional absences unless all absences are due to a documented serious medical condition or required attendance at athletic events. The four short assignments, at least one of which will be a small-group exercise, will ask students to apply the analytical tools that we learn in specific contexts and/or to a question of each student's own choosing. Each short assignment will be handed out on a Wednesday (2/12, 2/26, 3/19, and 4/2) and will be due the immediately following Sunday by 8pm.

You are welcome—and I encourage you—to form study groups, but note that each student's graded written work must be individually produced, except for the small-group exercise.

Also, each student in PS130 is expected to participate in at least one course-specific experiment in the Political Science Experimental Research Subject Pool (PSRP). In addition, students may participate in further studies in the PSRP on a strictly voluntary basis for up to 3% extra credit. More information about this opportunity will be available in class during the second week of classes and at http://www.duke.edu/web/psrp If you wish to participate, you can register at: http://duke-psrp.sona-systems.com by February 21.

Readings

The 7 books below are available for purchase at the Duke Bookstore, since we use numerous selections from them (one copy of each of them is also on reserve at Perkins Library). Required readings that are not contained in these books are available online via Duke's electronic journal holdings (indicated by "online" below), or they are on electronic reserves (e-res). Occasionally, a reading may be available via the course website (cws).


Note: This supplemental text is only recommended for students who anticipate doing applied data analysis for research papers or a senior thesis. It is also on reserve.


Required readings for each class are listed below. You should generally do them before the lecture for which they are assigned. For some classes, the syllabus also lists "further readings." Those readings are listed only to provide a starting point for students who might wish to follow up on the topic of that particular lecture; none of them are required to get an "A" in this course.

i>Clickers

Throughout the course, we will use "i>Clicker" to allow instantaneous interactive feedback on the material as well as conduct some quizzes and surveys in class. You therefore need to purchase an i>Clicker2 or, if you have a compatible phone such as an iPhone, install and register the i>Clicker GO app (and bring your phone to class). Details about the technology can be found at http://www1.iclicker.com/

There is a sizeable "secondary market" in i>Clickers at Duke, supported by the Center for Instructional Technology might allow you to purchase a used one more economically. You can find a list of fellow students offering their gently used i>Clicker2 devices at https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AkY2lFiFs9uiDdE1fMkZUp6alJDSG9tYI1wT FJWdnc#gid=0 You can also put yourself on the list as wanting to buy one.

Software and Help

We will be using a statistical software called STATA for those parts of the course where we work with data (from descriptive statistics to regression). You can buy a temporary "license" to install this software on your own computer. Those student licenses, available via the Duke OIT software webpages, are heavily discounted. But you do not need to have it on your own computer: You can also find Stata installed on the computers in most campus computer labs.

The Social Science Research Institute (SSRI, on the second floor of Gross Hall) has a great help desk, staffed by statistical consultants who are available for walk-in help from 10am to 6pm Monday through Friday. Alexandra Cooper from SSRI, who manages the help desk, will give you an overview of this very valuable support resource during one of the classes in week 3 of the course.

WHAT IS POLITICAL SCIENCE?

Introductions (Wed, Jan. 8)

No assigned readings.

The Study of Politics as a Social Science (Mon, Jan. 13)

Prof. Michael Gillespie will co-teach


Verdi, Giuseppe. Un Ballo in Maschera. Madrid (Spain): Teatro Real, 28 September 2008, available for streaming via Duke's subscription to Naxos Video Library: http://dukeu.naxosvideolibrary.com.proxy.lib.duke.edu/title/OA1017D/ Watch as much as you want, but required is only Act 3, Part 2, which starts at 1:47:20; it can be accessed by clicking on the "Chapters" tab on the right of the Naxos Video Library. Act 3, Part 2 corresponds to "chapters" 23 ("Forse la soglia attinse") through 28 ("Ella e pura"). I recommend watching in full screen mode, and unless your Italian is good enough, be sure to turn on English subtitles.
Foreign Aid and Its Critics: A Policy-Relevant Illustration of Key Themes of PS130
(Wed, Jan. 15)


Monday, Jan. 20 (Martin Luther King Holiday): NO CLASS

DESCRIPTIVE INFERENCE

Power and Democracy: From Concepts to Measurements  (Wed, Jan. 22)


Further Reading


Just How Polarized Is U.S. Politics? Measurements, Variables, and Distributions

Prof. John Aldrich and David Rohde will co-teach  (Mon, Jan. 27)


Background reading on polarization in U.S. politics TBA.

Further Readings

Democracy and (In)Equality: Do Democratic and Republican Economic Policies Differ?
Probability and Distributions (Wed, Jan. 29)


Further Reading

CAUSALITY

What's a Cause? Causality and Causal Inference (Mon, Feb. 3)


Further Reading

EXPERIMENTS

Gender and Violent Conflict; Participation and Legitimacy in Global Governance:
Lab Experiments (Wed, Feb. 5)


Note: These chapters from Büthe & Mattli 2011 provide the background to understanding the survey experiment on innovations in global governance in which all students will participate, and which we will then jointly examine in class; they also serve as background information for the week on sampling and surveys.

Further Reading


How to Increase Voter Turnout: Field Experiments (Mon, Feb. 10)


Further Reading


Does It Matter Whether Policymakers Are Women or Men? "Natural" Experiments (Wed, Feb. 12)


Further Reading


ANALYZING OBSERVATIONAL DATA: REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Introduction to OLS Regression 1 (Mon, Feb. 17)

Introduction to OLS Regression 2 (Wed, Feb. 19)


Who Governs in U.S. Politics? (Mon, Feb. 24)


Fostering Democracy from the Outside? The Effect(iveness) of Election Monitoring
Prof. Judith Kelley will co-teach (Wed, Feb. 26)


CASE STUDIES & CASE SELECTION

Exploratory, Hypothesis-Generating Case Studies (Mon, Mar. 3)


Further Reading


Further Reading

March 10-16: SPRING BREAK

Selecting Cases for Case Studies (Mon, Mar. 17)

The Effect of Political Institutions: Mixed-Methods Case Studies (Wed, Mar. 19)
Prof. Pablo Beramendi will co-teach

WHERE DATA COME FROM (1): SURVEY RESEARCH
Sampling and Surveys (Mon, Mar. 24)

Further Reading


UNDERSTANDING STRATEGIC INTERACTION

Who Wants to Play? Introduction to Game Theory (Mon, Mar. 31)


Further Readings

The Security Dilemma: Using Game Theory to Understand International Relations
Prof. Peter Feaver will co-teach (Wed, Apr. 2)


WHERE DATA COME FROM (2): CONTENT ANALYSIS AND ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Does Media Attention Drive Foreign Aid Allocation? An Introduction to Content Analysis (Mon, Apr. 7)


Further Readings

From Blogs to Twitter: Computer-Assisted Content Analysis and the Political Analysis of New Media (Wed, Apr. 9)

Reading(s) TBA.

Further Readings
History will not be kind to Neville Chamberlain. … I know because I am going to write it.
— Winston Churchill as quoted by David Cannadine (Financial Times 19 Nov 2005).

**The Role of Religion in the Development of Political Institutions: Archival Research and the Critical Use of Sources** (Mon, Apr. 14)

*Prof. Timur Kuran will co-teach*


cws Substantive Reading TBA.

**Further Readings**


**BEYOND POSITIVISM**

**Roads Less Traveled: Non-Positivist Epistemology, Interpretivism, Discourse Analysis** (Mon, Apr. 21)


**Further Readings**


**POLITICAL SCIENCE AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

**Review and Conclusions** (Wed, Apr. 23)
