

Prof. Melissa Marschall
BSB 1122B
Phone: 413-3774

Office Hrs: Wed. 2-4 &
Thurs. 4-6, or by appt.
E-mail: marschal@uic.edu

POLS 404: Research Design
Fall 2000
Thurs. 6:00-8:30 p.m.
BSB 1171

Course Objective

The objective of this course is to provide students with a firm foundation for both understanding the research enterprise and conducting social scientific research. Students will learn the strategies and techniques of social science research and thus be able to distinguish what is and is not social science research. By the end of the course, students should have the skills to design and implement their own research program and also be readily able to analyze and evaluate research conducted by other social scientists.

Course Format

The first few weeks of class will focus more generally on the basic issues behind all research designs—developing theory, specifying testable hypotheses from theory, assessing the validity of the research design employed, evaluating findings and implications of the research, etc. During these first weeks we will also explore the obstacles all research designs face and survey some available strategies to deal with these obstacles. During these first weeks, I will take primary responsibility for presenting the material and leading class discussions.

For the remainder of the course, we will examine in detail the various methods and techniques of conducting social scientific research. While the readings will include some instructional information regarding the nuts and bolts of these methods, for the most part, they will present applications and illustrations of these methods for specific social scientific theories. We will typically spend the first part of our class time discussing the specific research design and issues under consideration. The majority of the class time will be devoted to a discussion of the articles illustrating the particular method. Each week designated students will provide a brief presentation of these articles and generally lead to the discussion of these readings.

Course Materials

Three texts have been ordered for this course:

- Becker, Howard S. 1986. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book or Article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Shively, W. Phillips. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research, 4th Edition*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Press.

All three texts are available at the University Book Store (750 South Halsted Street, 413-5500). If you have any trouble obtaining any of the books, please notify me as soon as possible. I have also placed copies of the texts on reserve at the library. If you plan to use the reserve copies, please note that the Shively text is not the newest edition. It will be your responsibility to check for comparability in texts. In addition to the three

[required] texts, you also need to purchase the course packet from the Political Science Department main office (the Dept. accepts checks only).

Course Requirements

This course is structured as a seminar, so attendance and class participation are not only required, but constitute a sizable portion of your grade. You will be expected to have read all of the materials for the week in advance. Each week you will also write a **1-page** reaction paper on any of the issues or topics included in the readings for that week. This paper must be turned in to me (via e-mail or hard copy) by 5 pm the day before our class meeting (Wednesday). Though I will under no circumstances accept late papers, you will have one 'free' week. In other words, one time during the semester you can skip writing and turning in a reaction paper. Note however, that this does not mean that you can also skip the readings for this week!

Starting September 21st, each week's readings will include several examples from political and social science literature that illustrates the methods discussed that week. You should evaluate these examples in terms of the application of the method. The best way to do this is to begin reading well before each class meeting and take notes on what you have read. When you finish reading one of these examples, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- What theory guided the work? What was the research question the author(s) investigated?
- What specific hypotheses were tested?
- What data were used? What method was used to gather the data?
- Was the method appropriate for testing the hypotheses?
- What conclusions did the author(s) reach? Were these supported by the data and methods used?
- If you were to repeat or extend this study, what would you do the same and what would you do differently?

These are the kinds of questions we will discuss each week. For each article, one or more student will be responsible for presenting a brief summary (no more than 5 minutes) of the research, and a leading the discussion of this particular example. As a discussion leader, you will probably want to spend about 10 minutes critiquing various aspects of the research and raising questions about the overall method and findings presented in the article. In most cases, the discussion leader will not have more than 15 minutes in total for his/her presentation. After the presentation, the class (myself included) will have the opportunity to ask questions of the presenter and discuss the article in more detail. I will serve as both moderator and participant in our weekly class discussions. While I don't anticipate the need, should there be a lack of participation amongst other students and/or should the quality of these discussions be sub par due to students' lack of careful reading, I reserve the right to give in-class quizzes on the reading material.

In addition to the weekly reaction papers, you will also have two larger assignments. You will be given explicit instructions for these in class. One will be assigned after the first few weeks of class and the other will be assigned before the Thanksgiving break. The former will be due sometime in October and the latter will be due during the final exam week and will serve as the final project for the course. There will not be a final exam in this course. These assignments must be turned in on the specified due date. Again, late work will not be accepted unless circumstances are extreme. If you find yourself in this situation, you absolutely must contact me ahead of time to inform me. Post-hoc excuses are unacceptable without exception.

Grades will be determined as follows:

Assignment 1:	20% (due date to be announced)
Assignment 2:	25% (due Dec. 4)
Reaction papers (11):	25% (due weekly on Wednesdays by 5 pm)
Participation/Presentations:	30%

Course Topics and Schedule of Readings

Thurs., Aug. 24: Course Introduction

Thurs., Aug. 31: Writing in Social Science



Becker. 1986. *Writing for Social Scientists*: All.

*Class does not meet.



Turn in reaction paper Wed., Sept. 6

Thurs., Sept. 7: Approaches and Models in Political Science



Shively. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*, Chpts. 1-3



King, Keohane & Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*, Chpts. 1 & 2.



Turn in reaction paper Wed., Sept. 6

Thurs., Sept. 14: Operationalizing Theoretical Models



Shively. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*, Chpts. 4-6.



King, Keohane & Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*, Chpts. 3 & 4.



Turn in reaction paper Wed., Sept. 13

Thurs., Sept. 21: Experimental Designs



Kinder, Donald R. and Thomas R. Palfrey. 1993. "On Behalf of an Experimental Political Science." *In Experimental Foundations of Political Science*, eds. Donald Kinder and Thomas Palfrey, 1-39. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.



Lodge, Milton and Ruth Hamill. 1986. "A Partisan Schema for Political Information Processing." *American Political Science Review* 80 (June): 505-19.



Weiss, Janet A. 1982. "Coping with Complexity: An Experimental Study of Public Policy Decision-Making." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 2 (1): 66-87. [Reprinted in Kinder & Palfrey (1993): 185-208.]



Iyengar, Shanto, Mark D. Peters, and Donald R. Kinder. 1982. "Experimental Demonstrations of the 'Not-So-Minimal' Consequences of Television News Programs." *American Political Science Review* 76: 848-58. [Reprinted in Kinder & Palfrey (1993): 313-331.]



Turn in reaction paper Wed., Sept. 20

Thurs., Sept. 28: Quasi-Experimental Designs





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 (August): 33-53. [Reprinted in Edward Tufte. 1970. *The Quantitative Analysis of Social Problems*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.




Shingles, Richard D. 1975. "Community Action and Attitude Change: A Case

of Adult Political Socialization.” *Experimental Studies of Politics* 4 (3): 38-81.


-  Schneider, Mark, Paul Teske, Melissa Marschall, Michael Mintrom & Christine Roch. 1997. “Institutional Arrangements and the Creation of Social Capital: The Effects of Public School Choice.” *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 1 (March): 82-93.


 **Turn in reaction paper Wed., Sept. 27**


Thurs., Oct. 5: Cross-Sectional Designs: Secondary Data and Document Analysis

-  Maier, Mark H. 1995. Chapter 1, “Introduction” (pgs. 1-5) and Chapter 7, “The National Economy” (pgs. 101-21). In *The Data Game: Controversies in Social Science Statistics, 2nd Edition*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

-  Meyer, William H. 1989. “Global News Flows: Dependency and Neoimperialism.” *Comparative Political Studies* 22, no. 3 (October): 243-64.


-  Midlarsky, Manus I. 1988. “Rulers and the Ruled: Patterned Inequality and The Onset of Mass Political Violence.” *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 2 (June): 491-509.


-  Muller, Edward N., Mitchell A. Seligson, and Hung-der Fu. 1989. “Land Inequality and Political Violence.” *American Political Science Review* 83, no. 3 (June): 577-96.


-  Segal, Jeffrey A. and Albert D. Cover. 1989. “Ideological Values and the Votes of Supreme Court Justices.” *American Political Science Review* 83, no. 2 (June): 558-65.


 **Turn in reaction paper Wed., Oct. 4**

Thurs., Oct. 12: Cross-Sectional Designs: Survey Research

-  Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and David Nachmias. 2000. Chpt. 10, “Survey Research” (pgs. 205-28). In *Research Methods in the Social Sciences, Six Edition*. NY: Worth Publishers.

-  Maier, Mark H. 1995. Chpt. 12, “Public Opinion Polling” (pgs. 205-28). In *The Data Game: Controversies in Social Science Statistics, 2nd Edition*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

-  Brehm, John. 1989. “How Survey Nonresponse Damages Political Analysis.” Presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Assoc., Atlanta, GA.

-  Feldman, Stanley and John Zaller. 1992. “The Political Culture of Ambivalence: Ideological Responses to the Welfare State.” *American Journal of Political Science* 36, no. 1 (February): 268-307.

-  Sullivan, John L., James E. Pierson, and George E. Marcus. 1978.

“Ideological Constraint in the Mass Public: A Methodological Critique and Some New Findings.” *American Journal of Political Science* 22 (May): 233-49



Turn in reaction paper Wed., Oct. 11

Thurs., Oct. 19:

Cross-Level Designs/Contextual Analysis



Przeworski, Adam and Henry Teune. 1970. Chpt. 3, “System Level Variables: Changing the Level of Analysis” (pgs. 47-73). In *Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. NY: John Wiley & Sons.



Oliver, J. Eric. 2000. “City Size and Civic Involvement in Metropolitan America.” *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (June): 361-74.



Huckfeldt, Robert and J. Sprague. 1987. “Networks in Context: The Social Flow of Political Information.” *American Political Science Review* 81, no. 4 (December): 1197-1216.



Lee, Valerie E. and Julia B. Smith. 1993. “Effects of School Restructuring on the Achievement and Engagement of Middle-grade Students.” *Sociology of Education* 66 (July): 164-187.



Alex-Assensoh, Yvette. 1997. “Race, Concentrated Poverty, Social Isolation, and Political Behavior.” *Urban Affairs Review* 33, no. 2 (November): 209-27.



Turn in reaction paper Wed., Oct. 18

Thurs., Oct. 26:

Longitudinal Designs and Issues



Bienen, Henry and Nicolas Van De Walle. 1989. “Time and Power in Africa.” *American Political Science Review* 83, no. 1 (March): 19-34.



Wood, B. Dan and Richard W. Waterman. 1991. “The Dynamics of Political Control of the Bureaucracy.” *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 3 (September): 801-28.



Page, Benjamin I. and Robert Y. Shapiro. 1983. “Effects of Public Opinion on Policy.” *American Political Science Review* 77: 175-90.



Ruhil, Anirudh V. “Politics of Municipal Civil Service Reform, 1930-1940. Working Paper, University of Illinois at Chicago.



Groseclose, Tim, Steven D. Levitt, and James M. Snyder, Jr. 1999. “Comparing Interest Group Scores across Time and Chambers: Adjusted ADA Scores for the U.S. Congress.” *American Political Science Review* 93, no. 1 (March): 33-50.



Turn in reaction paper Wed., Oct. 25


Thurs., Nov. 2:


Small-N Designs: Participant Observation, Elite Interviewing & Case Studies





Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and David Nachmias. 2000. Chpt. 9,

“Observational Methods” (pgs. 187-204), Chpt. 4, “Ethics in Social Science Research” (pgs. 67-86). In *Research Methods in the Social Sciences, Six Edition*. NY: Worth Publishers.


 Fenno, Richard F. 1978. Introduction (pgs. xi-xvi), Chpt. 3, “Home Style: Presentation of Self I (pgs. 54-100), Appendix, “Notes on Method: Participant Observation” (pgs. 249-96). In *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. NY: HarperCollins.

 Van Schendelen M.P.C.M. 1984. “Interviewing Members of Parliament.” *Political Methodology* 10 (3): 301-21.


 Riker, William H. 1982. Chpt. 9, “Manipulation and the Natural Selection of Issues: The Development of the Issue of Slavery as a Prelude to the American Civil War” (pgs. 213-32). In *Liberalism Against Populism*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

 **Turn in reaction paper Wed., Nov. 1**


Thurs., Nov. 9: Small-N Designs, Methods and Inference


 King, Keohane & Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*, Chpts. 5 & 6.


 Geddes, Barbara. 1990. “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics.” *Political Analysis* 2:131-52.


 **Turn in reaction paper Wed., Nov. 8**

Thurs., Nov. 16: Formal Models

 Fiorina, Morris P. 1975. “Formal Models in Political Science.” *American Journal of Political Science* 14, no. 1 (February): 133-59.

 Peterson, Paul E. 1981. Chpt. 1, “City Limits and the Study of Urban Politics” (pgs. 3-16), Chpt. 2, “The Interests of the Limited City” (pgs. 17-38). In *City Limits*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

 Riker, William H. 1982. Chpt. 1, “The Connection Between the Theory of Social Choice and the Theory of Democracy” (pgs. 1-19), Chpt. 2, “Different Choices from Identical Values” (pgs. 21-40), Chpt. 3, “Simple Majority Decision” (pgs. 41-64). In *Liberalism Against Populism*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

 **Turn in reaction paper Wed., Nov. 15.**

Thurs., Nov. 23: No Class, Thanksgiving Holiday

Thurs., Nov. 30: Course wrap-up

Mon., Dec. 4: Submit Final Assignment (due by noon)