

University of Illinois at Chicago
Political Science 201
Political Data Analysis

Spring Term, 2004

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This course is intended to provide political science students with a basic understanding of statistical analysis as it might be used in political science research. This understanding will be based on the student's completion of approximately eight individual projects in which the student will collect and analyze data on an appropriate phenomenon of interest to the student. We will make extensive use of the statistical analysis software program SPSS.

Tentative order of topics:

1. The purpose of statistics and understanding different types of observations.
2. Collecting observations of categorical qualities.
3. Collecting observations of measurable qualities: mean and standard deviation.
4. Understanding probability distributions.
5. Comparing measurable observations from two different groups.
6. Comparing measurable observations from several different groups.
7. Comparing categorical qualities of several different groups.
8. Exploring the possibility that some observed characteristic of a group caused a second observed characteristic.
9. Comparing observations of a phenomenon over time.

Grade composition:

- 80% Individual research projects using assigned methods (8 x 10%).
- 20% Final Data Analysis Project (includes presentation).

The reading list and assignment particulars will be distributed separately.

Any student with special instructional needs should consult with me at the beginning of the semester.