

<b>Course Title:</b>	Empirical Political Analysis: Approaches and Methods
<b>Course Code:</b>	POL 3101
<b>Recommended Study Year:</b>	Third or Fourth Year
<b>No. of Credits/Term:</b>	3
<b>Mode of Tuition:</b>	Lecture–Tutorial
<b>Class Contact Hours:</b>	3 hours per week
<b>Category in Major Program:</b>	Major in Political Science (Required Course)
<b>Discipline:</b>	Political Science
<b>Teaching Period:</b>	First Term, 2019–2020

### **Instructor:**

Dr. Dong ZHANG

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**Office Hours:** Wednesday 1:30–3:30 PM; Thursday 4:30–6:30 PM; or by appointment

**Lecture:** Thursday 10:30 AM–12:30 PM (MBG 01)

### **Course Overview:**

This course is designed to introduce students to a wide range of empirical research methods in the study of politics. Topics will include concept formation, theory development and testing, the design of data collection activities, basic qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. For each method, we will discuss the theoretical background, practical implementation issues, and examples from the literature. Examples covered in the course will span many areas of political science including political behaviour, comparative politics, international relations, and public policy.

### **Teaching Methods:**

This course consists of short lectures, classroom discussions, presentations, and research and writing.

### **Aims:**

- Equip students with the skills to design, implement, and analyze political science research through various methodologies.
- Expose students to the logic of scientific methods and cutting-edge political science studies.
- Introduce students to the tools of data visualization and exploratory data analysis.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course, the aim is that students will have improved the ability to:

- Understand theories, hypotheses, and methods used in empirical political science research.
- Identify, describe, and assess the strengths and weaknesses of research designs in the study of politics.
- Develop a research proposal including a research question, a literature review, testable hypotheses, a description of the proposed research methods and data collection procedures.
- Use statistical software R to visualize the data and do exploratory data analysis.

### **Assessment of Learning Outcomes:**

- **Class Participation (25%):** Students are expected to complete all required readings prior to each lecture. To secure a good participation grade, students are encouraged to actively contribute to the conversation. In addition, each student will sign up for one tutorial session during the course. Two (up to three) students will work as a team to make a presentation and lead discussion in each week's tutorial session.
- **A Survey Research Proposal or Report (35%):** In a team of three (up to four) students, you will write a survey research proposal or report of approximately 6 to 8 pages (Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spaced). Students must consult the instructor concerning the topic of their survey research. The proposal (or report) should include research questions, the question questionnaire design, sampling procedures (and preliminary results). Further details of expectations will be given during the course. This assignment will be due on **Monday, December 2 at noon.**
- **Final Exam (40%):** The final will cover all the course material throughout the semester.

### **Prerequisites:**

POL2101 Introduction to Political Science

### **Course Materials:**

There are no required books for this course. All readings will be made available in electronic form through Moodle.

### **Software:**

In this course, we will be using R, a free statistical platform, to produce graphics and do data analysis. R is free and available for Windows and Macintosh from <http://cran.r-project.org/>. We will also install a friendly interface to R called RStudio. RStudio is also free and available for Windows and Macintosh at <http://www.rstudio.com>.

### **Important Notes:**

1. Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
2. Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is "the presentation of another person's work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student's own work." Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
3. Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
4. To enhance students' understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course "Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness" is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.

## Course Schedule and Reading List

### Week 1: Introduction

Thursday, September 5

There is no required reading for this lecture.

### Week 2: Theories and Hypotheses

Thursday, September 12

#### Required Reading:

- Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton University Press, 1994).
  - Chapter 1

#### R Session:

- ◊ Introduction to R

### Week 3: Conceptualization and Measurement

Thursday, September 19

#### Required Reading:

- Gerardo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen, “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices,” *Comparative Political Studies* 35, 1 (2002): 5–34.

#### R Session:

- ◊ Univariate Graphs

### Week 4: Qualitative Data Collection: Interviews and Archival Research

Thursday, September 26

#### Required Reading:

- Christopher Darnton, “Archives and Inference: Documentary Evidence in Case Study Research and the Debate over U.S. Entry into World War II,” *International Security* 42, (3) 2018: 84–126.

#### R Session:

- ◊ Bivariate Graphs I

### **Week 5: Quantitative Data Collection: Sampling and Survey Research**

Thursday, October 3

#### **Required Reading:**

- Kellee S. Tsai, “Capitalists without a Class: Political Diversity Among Private Entrepreneurs in China,” *Comparative Political Studies* 38, (9) 2005: 1130–1158.

#### **R Session:**

- ◇ Bivariate Graphs II

### **Week 6: Qualitative Methods I: Cross Case Study**

Thursday, October 10

#### **Required Reading:**

- Richard Doner, Bryan Ritchie, and Dan Slater, “Systemic Vulnerability and the Origins of Developmental States: Northeast and Southeast Asia in Comparative Perspective,” *International Organization* 59: (2) 2005: 327–361.

#### **R Session:**

- ◇ Multivariate Graphs

### **Week 7: Qualitative Methods II: Within Case Study**

Thursday, October 17

#### **Required Reading:**

- James Ashley Morrison, “Before Hegemony: Adam Smith, American Independence, and the Origins of the First Era of Globalization,” *International Organization* 66, (3) 2012: 395–428

#### **R Session:**

- ◇ Time-dependent Graphs

### **Week 8: Quantitative Methods I: Experimental Method**

Thursday, October 24

#### **Required Reading:**

- Leonard Wantchekon, “Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin” *World Politics* 55: (3) 2003: 399–422.

#### **R Session:**

- ◇ Experiment Analysis

**Week 9: Quantitative Methods II: Regression Analysis**

*Thursday, October 31*

**Required Reading:**

- Michael L. Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53: (3) 2001: 325–361.

**R Session:**

- ◇ Regression Analysis

**Week 10: Quantitative Methods III: Big Data Approach**

*Thursday, November 7*

**Required Reading:**

- William R. Hobbs and Margaret E. Roberts, “How Sudden Censorship Can Increase Access to Information,” *American Political Science Review* 112, (3) 2018: 621–636.

**R Session:**

- ◇ Textual Data

**Week 11: Writing a Research Proposal**

*Thursday, November 14*

There is no required reading for this lecture.

**R Session:**

- ◇ Maps

\*\*\*\*\* No Meeting on November 21(Congregation) \*\*\*\*\*

**Week 12: Course Wrap-up & Review**

*Thursday, November 28*