

PL SC 308: Course Blueprint

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Topic	Objectives	Tasks	Content	
1	Introduction and Philosophy of Science	(1) Introduction to the course and the scientific study of political behaviour. (2) Establish each student's baseline knowledge.	(1) Read the syllabus and assigned readings. (2) Based on the introductory chapter from the textbook (reading 3), try to identify the design features in reading 4 in note form.	(1) Syllabus. (2) Keohane, 2009, "Political Science as a Vocation." (3) TD, Ch. 1. ¹ (4) Caprioli and Boyer, 2001, "Gender, Violence, and International Crisis."
2	Engaging the Discipline	Observe the process of identifying relevant research questions through a literature review.	(1) Read assigned core readings. (2) Choose a set of elective readings and identify the main research questions outlined. Post to class forum and discuss other students' contributions.	Core: (1) Knopf, 2006, "Doing a Literature Review." (2) KKV, 1.2. ² (3) Zinnes, 1980, "Three Puzzles in Search of a Researcher." Electives: (1) a. Canes-Wrone, 2015, "From Mass Preferences to Policy." b. Schultz, 2015, "Borders, Conflict, and Trade." (2) a. Dafoe, Renshon, and Huth, 2014, "Reputation and Status as Motives for War." b. Valentino, 2014, "Why We Kill." (3) a. Lawless, 2015, "Female Candidates and Legislators." b. Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014, "Public Attitudes Toward Immigration."

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3 From Concepts to Operationalization	<p>(1) Identify the importance of theory-building, and what makes “good” theory.</p> <p>(2) Identify the central concept to a question, and design a measure for it.</p>	<p>(1) Read assigned core readings.</p> <p>(2) Read core reading (5) and discuss two of the four approaches to measuring party positions. (3) Choose an elective reading from Lesson 2. In a short essay, summarize the concept being measured, and propose an operationalization. Discuss your rationale for your operationalization.</p>	<p>Core: (1) Vasquez, 1997, “The Realist Paradigm and Degenerative versus Progressive Research Programs.”</p> <p>(2) TD, 3-1a, b, c, 3-2a, b, c. (3) Adock and Collier, 2001, “Measurement Validity.” (4) Herrera and Kapur, 2007, “Improving Data Quality.” (5) Ray, 2007, “Validity of Measured Party Positions on European Integration.”</p>
4 Examples I	Identify the research design features (from lessons 2-4) of political science research.	<p>(1) Choose an elective reading. In a short essay, summarize and critique the study in terms of the design features discussed so far (weeks 2-3). (2) Post your paper to the forum and discuss other students’ contributions.</p>	Electives: (1) Lax and Phillips, 2012, “The Democratic Deficit in the State.” (2) Golden and Chang, 2001, “Competitive Corruption.” (3) Gartner, Segura, and Wilkening, 1997, “All Politics are Local.”
5 Introduction to Inference	Understand the logic behind different types of inference.	(1) Read assigned readings.	(1) KKV, 2.6-2.7, 3.1-3.4. (2) TD, Ch. 8. (3) Keele, 2015, “The Statistics of Causal Inference.”
6 Controlled Treatments	(1) Understand the concept of controlled treatments and randomization.	(1) Review KKV, 3.1-3.4. (2) Read assigned core readings.	Core: (1) TD, Ch. 9. (2) McDermott, 2002, “Experimental Methods in Political Science.” (3) Chatterji et al., 2015, “Field Experiments in Strategy Research.” (4) Mutz, 2007, “Effects of ‘In-Your-Face’ Television Discourse on Perceptions of a Legitimate Opposition.”

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	(2) Introduction to experiments in political science.	(3) Choose an elective reading. In a short essay, identify the design features of the experiment from the study.	Electives: (1) Tomz, 2007, “Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations.” (2) Chen, Pan, and Xu, 2015, “Sources of Authoritarian Responsiveness.” (3) Malesky, Tran, and Schuler, 2012, “A Field Experiment on Legislative Transparency in an Authoritarian Assembly.”
7	Uncontrolled Treatments I: Mimicking Random Assignment	(1) Read assigned core readings.	Core: (1) Jones and Olken, 2009, “Hit or Miss?” (2) TD, Ch. 10.
	(2) Introduction to quasi-experiments in political science.	(3) Choose a set of elective readings. In a short essay, summarize and assess the identification strategy. Post your essay to the forum and engage other students’ contributions.	Electives: (1) a. Lyall, 2009, “Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks?” b. Pettersson-Lidbom, 2008, “Do Parties Matter for Economic Outcomes.” (2) a. Hyde, 2007, “The Observer Effect in International Politics.” b. Eggers and Hainmueller, 2009, “MPs for Sale?” (3) a. Posner, 2004, “The Political Salience of Cultural Differences.” b. Kasnja and Titunik, 2016, “The Incumbency Curse.”
8	Uncontrolled Treatments II: Instrumental Variables	(1) Read assigned core readings.	Core: (1) Madestam and Yanagizawa-Drott, 2012, “Shaping the Nation.” (2) Ritter and Conrad, 2015, “Preventing and Responding to Dissent.”
	(2) Introduction to instrumental variable analyses in political science.	(2) In two separate short essays, describe the logic behind the identification strategy from (1) Ritter and Conrad’s study, and (2) a study from one of the elective readings.	Electives: (1) Ramsay, 2011, “Revisiting the Resource Curse.” (2) Hansford and Gomez, 2010, “Estimating the Electoral Effects of Voter Turnout.” (3) Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, 2001, “The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development.”

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9 Uncontrolled Treatments III: Conditional Ignorability and Moving Beyond Attempts at Identification	<p>(1) Understand the conditional ignorability assumption and what it affords in terms of causal identification.</p> <p>(2) Understand matching as a technique and differentiate it from an identification strategy.</p> <p>(3) Think about the goal of scientific research in terms of explaining versus predicting phenomenon.</p>	<p>(1) Read assigned core readings.</p> <p>(2) Choose an elective reading. In a short essay, summarize and assess the identification strategy. Post your essay to the forum and engage other students' contributions.</p> <p>(3) Read assigned readings.</p>	<p>Core: (1) Sekhon, 2009, "Opiates for the Matches." Electives: (1) Boyd, Epstein, and Martin, 2010, "Untangling the Causal Effects of Sex on Judging." (2) Fowler, 2008, "The Colbert Bump in Campaign Donations: More Truthful than Truthy." (3) Lyall, 2009, "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks?"</p> <p>Core: (2) Shmueli, 2010, "To Explain or Predict?" (3) Ward, Greenhill, and Bakke, 2010, "The Perils of Policy by p-Value."</p>
10 Examples II	Identify the research design features (from lessons 6-8) of political science research.	<p>(1) Choose an elective reading. In a short essay, summarize and critique the study in terms of the design features discussed so far (weeks 6-9). (2) Post your paper to the forum and discuss other students' contributions.</p>	Electives: Articles published within three years from the list of journals provided.

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11 Sampling I: The Logic of Sampling, Probability Sampling, and Threats to Representativeness	Understand the logic of sampling, and the implications of sampling decisions.	(1) Read assigned readings. (2) Identify the sampling design features in Berkman et al.'s article.	(1) TD, Ch. 2. (2) Berinsky, 2002, "Silent Voices." (3) Mindel, Aresu, Becares, and Tolonen, 2011, "Representativeness of participants in a cross-sectional health survey by time of day and day of week of data collection." (4) Berkman, Pacheco, and Plutzer, 2008, "Evolution and Creationism in America's Classrooms."
12 Sampling II: Nonprobability Sampling	Overview of nonprobability sampling methods.	(1) Read assigned readings.	(1) Welch, 1975, "Sampling by Referral in a Dispersed Population." (2) Sears, 1986, "College Sophomores in the Laboratory." (3) Horton, Rand, and Zeckhauser, 2011, "The Online Laboratory." (4) Huff and Tingley, 2015, "Who are these people?" (5) Exadaktylos, Espin, and Branas-Garza, 2013, "Experimental Subjects Are Not Different."
13 Research Ethics I: Researcher-Subject Interaction	Consider ethical issues in political science research.	(1) Complete Penn State IRB training. (2) Read assigned core readings. (3) Choose an elective reading. In a short essay, summarize and discuss the chapter. Post your paper to the forum and discuss other students' contributions.	Link to Penn State IRB. Core: (1) Fujii, "Research Ethics 101." (2) Michelson, 2014, "Messing with Montana." (3) Leeper, 2014, "In Defense of the Montana Experiment." Electives: Chapters from Desposato 2015.

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14 Research Ethics II: Interactions within the Research Community	Understanding the importance of transparency in research, and identify the implications of intransparency.	(1) Read assigned core readings. (2) Choose two elective readings and summarize them. Post your summaries to the forum and discuss other students' contributions.	Core: (1) King, 1995, "Replication, Replication." (2) Lupia, 2008, "Procedural transparency and the credibility of election surveys." (3) Introduction to the <i>PS</i> (Jan. 2014) symposium. (4) Introduction and Conclusion to the <i>QMMR Newsletter</i> (13-1) symposium. (5) Introduction to the <i>CP Newsletter</i> (26-1) symposium. Electives: Articles (non-introductory) from the <i>PS</i> , <i>QMMR</i> , and <i>CP</i> symposiums on DA-RT.
15 Exploring the Research Frontier	Observe the cutting-edge research topics of the field and the research designs accompanying them.	(1) Choose one of the elected readings. Summarize all aspects of the paper in detail, with particular focus on the aspects related to the course. (2) Post the paper to the class forum and engage each other.	Electives: To be selected by the course instructor.

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