Theory and Methods of Political Science

PSPA 2330 Sec. 001 **Spring 2012**

Instructor: Dr. Emily Neff-Sharum
Meet: Lecture- T/TH 2-3:15 SCI 2239
Lab- T 3:30-4:20 SCI 1246
Office: Oxendine 1320 B Office hours: W 9:30-2pm
T/TH 11-noon
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Please check Blackboard regularly.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Text: Pollock, Philip H. III. 2011. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 4th Ed. CQ Press.
Pollock, Philip H. III. 2011. *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*. 4th Ed. CQ Press.

Books will arrive to the UNCP Bookstore on Thursday, Jan. 12th. Books will come together in a shrink-wrapped package. You should have two books and one CD with data.

SPSS:

Lab time: We will be learning the statistical software, SPSS. Most of this work will be done in the computer lab, which has SPSS on it. Many computer labs on campus have access to SPSS in case you have work you need to finish.

Virtual Computing Lab: If you would like to practice and finish up lab assignments at home you can access the Virtual Computing Lab through DoIT. http://www.uncp.edu/doit/vcl/ I encourage you to look at the instructions about how to access the lab ASAP and think about when you would like to make reservations.

Articles: These will be assigned throughout the term as examples of various methods and can be found on Blackboard.

I highly recommend keeping abreast of current events that may develop during the course of the quarter regarding decisions the Supreme Court makes. You can keep up by either reading a national newspaper (i.e., www.washingtonpost.com or www.nytimes.com), listening to the news (i.e., podcasts available at npr.org), or watching the news (i.e., your favorite news program or cnn.com).

GRADING

Participation and attendance	5%
Homework	20%
Lab work	15%
Exams	40%

Final exam 20%

Grading scale—100-95 = A; 94-92= A-; 91-88= B+; 87-84=B; 83-80=B-; 79-77= C+; 76-73= C; 72-70= C-; 69-67= D+; 66-63= D;

Participation and attendance— You should be prepared for class and ready to both answer question as well as pose questions. You will not get full credit for this component by simply coming to class. Attending class daily will only earn you an 80%. You must also be willing to engage the course to get full credit.

Homework—Homework assignments will include completing end of chapter exercises and analysis assignments. Assignments should be typed. Diagrams may be hand drawn.

Labwork—Each day in lab we will be working through the lab book. You will be required to print and submit your work at the end of each session. Be sure you bring printer paper with you.

Exams—Every three weeks we will have a short exam to mark your learning. These will not have study guides. Be sure to keep your old exams to help you study for the final exam. I will drop your lowest exam score.

Final Exam—The final exam will be cumulative.

This course requires you to use APA citation and writing style. For more information on this please refer to the Purdue Online Writing Lab found at the following web address: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.
Grade complaints must be made in writing after 24 hours but no later than one week after return of your assignment. Complaints must be specific about why a mistake in grading has happened and must be responsive to the comments provided. I worked hard or I need this grade to get into law school are not acceptable grounds for complaint.

Extra Credit- Students have the option of earning 5 points of extra credit, which will be assigned to your lowest scoring course component. Extra credit is earned by attending a combination of three of the following events: departmental movie nights, the public viewing of the State of the Union Address, annual spring International Relations/ Public Administration speaker, and other talks as announced.

PREPARING FOR CLASS

Read the assigned material. This class will move quickly, and concepts will build upon each other. The result is that if you miss a section of reading, later concepts will be difficult for you to understand. Be sure you keep up on the reading.

Bring your workbook and data CD with you every Tuesday for lab. You will be unable to complete the activities we have planned if you do not have the workbook with you.

DISABLED STUDENTS: Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak directly to Disability Support Services (located in the D.F. Lowry Building) and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Please contact DSS at 521-6695. The syllabus is also available in alternate formats upon request. Please call the aforementioned number if you desire this.

"When testing accommodations or alternative testing is needed, students are responsible for discussing this issue with the professor to make the appropriate arrangements to have the exam administered. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule exams with DSS at least one week prior to the exam date. Failure to schedule an exam one week in advance may lead to DSS denying the requested time and date for the exam." For the Exam Proctoring Authorization Form and for more information, visit http://www.uncp.edu/dss/students/directions_for_accesing_exams_for_current_students.htm.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) found will result in an automatic "F" for that assignment and notification to the appropriate Deans.

From the UNCP Student Handbook: "Plagiarism is intentionally or knowingly presenting someone else's words or ideas as one's own. You avoid plagiarism by very carefully acknowledging the sources of ideas you use and by appropriately indicating any material that has been quoted [or paraphrased] (that is, by using quotation marks and properly acknowledging the source of the quote, usually with a clear reference source citation and page number)." If an instance comes up where you are unsure whether or not you should cite, play it safe and cite. Visit http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html for more information on plagiarism.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1- Jan. 9-13
Introduction
READING: Handouts

Developing Social Science Research Questions
Week 2 – Jan. 16- 20-
Reading: Handouts, Chapter 1, Chapter 1 SPSS
Lab—Chapter 1 SPSS

Understanding Variables
Week 3—Jan. 23-27
Reading: Chapter 2, Chapter 2
Lab— Chapter 2 SPSS

Hypotheses and Comparisons
Week 4—Jan. 30-Feb. 3
Reading: Chapter 3, SPSS Chapter 3, Handout
Lab—SPSS Chapter 3

Thursday Exam 1

Research Design and Validity
Week 5—Feb. 6-10
Reading: Chapter 4, SPSS Chapter 4
Lab— SPSS Chapter 4

Experimental Design con't/ Survey Design
Week 6—Feb. 13- 17
Reading: Handouts
Lab— TBA

Survey Design con't
Week 7—Feb. 20-24
Reading: Handouts
Lab— TBA
Thursday Exam 2

Content Analysis- Coding primary sources
Week 8— Feb. 27- March 2
Reading: Handouts
Lab— Sample coding

Week 9—SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS Feb. 27- March 2

Field Work
Week 10- March 12-16
Reading: Handouts
Lab— TBA

Comparison testing
Week 11-- March 19- 23
Reading: Chapter 5, SPSS Chapter 5
Lab—SPSS Chapter 5

Sampling
Week 12— March 26- 30
Reading: Handouts
Lab—SPSS Chapter 5

Random Sampling and Error
Week 13— April 2- 6
Reading: Chapter 6, SPSS Chapter 6
Lab— SPSS Chapter 6

Significance Testing
<u>Week 14— April 9-13</u>
Reading: Chapter 7, SPSS Chapter 7
Lab— SPSS Chapter 7
Thursday Exam 3

<u>Week 15— April 16- 20</u>
Tues —
Lab—
Thurs—

<u>Week 16— April 23- 27</u>
Tues —
Lab—
Thurs—

FINAL EXAM—