

Political Science 51: The Scientific Study of Politics

TR, 12:10-1:30 PM, Wellman 2

<https://canvas.ucdavis.edu/courses/230538>

Section A01: T, 2:10-3:00 PM, Kerr 451

Section A02: T, 3:10-4:00 PM, Kerr 451

Section A03: F, 2:10-3:00 PM, Kerr 451

Section A04: F, 3:10-4:00 PM, Kerr 451

Section A05: R, 2:10-3:00 PM, Kerr 451

Section A06: R, 3:10-4:00 PM, Kerr 451

Instructor:

Professor Christopher Hare

cdhare@ucdavis.edu

Office Location: Kerr 574

Office Hours: Thursdays 3:30pm-5:30pm and by appointment

Teaching Assistants (section):

Carlos Algara (A01/A02)

calgara@ucdavis.edu

Office: Kerr 663

Hours: Mondays 10am-12pm

Ipek Bahceci (A03/A04)

itbahceci@ucdavis.edu

Office: Kerr 585

Hours: Mondays 1-3pm

Fan Lu (A05/A06)

fanlu@ucdavis.edu

Office: Kerr 577

Hours: Thursdays 4-6pm

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the *science* of political science. The first part of the course focuses on key concepts in the scientific study of politics: theory building, research design, and the measurement of political variables. The second component of the course provides training on methods for the empirical analysis of data.

Required Texts:

1. Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-1-107-62166-4
2. **Available online through UCD Libraries.** James E. Monogan III. *Political Analysis Using R*. New York: Springer, 2015. ISBN: 978-3-319-23445-8

Journal articles/handouts will be made available on Canvas (<https://canvas.ucdavis.edu/courses/230538>).

Grade Components:

Assignments 30%

Midterm Exam 35%

Final Exam (June 12, 10:30am) 35%

Grading System:

≥ 97	A+	87 - 89	B+	77 - 79	C+	67 - 69	D+	< 60	F
93 - 96	A	83 - 86	B	73 - 76	C	63 - 66	D		
90 - 92	A-	80 - 82	B-	70 - 72	C-	60 - 62	D-		

Class Attendance: I consider college students fully capable of making appropriate decisions with respect to class attendance and equally capable of living with the consequences of those decisions.

Assignments: There will be four homework assignments assigned throughout the course. I will drop the lowest grade, meaning that the remaining assignments each count 10% towards your final grade. No extensions will be given for any assignment without prior approval, or without a written medical excuse or note from the Dean's office. All late papers will be graded down one portion of a grade (e.g., from a "B+" to a "B") for every day late, including Saturday and Sunday.

Assignments must be submitted through Canvas <https://canvas.ucdavis.edu/courses/230538>.

Makeup Exams: Makeup exams will not be administered without prior approval, or without a written medical excuse or note from the Dean's office. You should make arrangements with me as soon as possible if you know that you will be absent for one of the exams.

Academic Honesty: I strictly adhere to the UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct (<http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>). I will report any suspected academic misconduct to Student Judicial Affairs.

Disabilities:

Students with special needs that require accommodation should notify the Student Disability Center (54 Cowell Building; 530.752.3184; <https://sdc.ucdavis.edu>) as soon as possible so that arrangements detailed in the Letter of Accommodation can be made.

Tentative Schedule:

This schedule is subject to change:

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 1 April 3 - April 5	Introduction	
Week 2 April 10 - April 12	Theory-Building: Rational Choice and Game Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Fundamentals of Political Science Research</i>, Chapters 1-2.• James McManus, "Game Theory: Poker, Bluffing, and the Royal Flush of Cold Warfare," http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/01/sports/othersports/bluffing-and-the-royal-flush-of-cold-warfare.html

Week 3 April 17 - April 19	Theory-Building: Issues with Rational Choice Theory and Spatial Voting Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fundamentals of Political Science Research</i>, Chapters 1-2. • Jonah Lehrer, “The Allais Paradox,” https://www.wired.com/2010/10/the-allais-paradox/
Week 4 April 24 - April 26 Assignment #1 Due: April 27	Causation and Research Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fundamentals of Political Science Research</i>, Chapters 3-4. • Ronald E. Milliman, “Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers,” <i>Journal of Marketing</i> 46: 86-91.
Week 5 May 1 - May 3	Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fundamentals of Political Science Research</i>, Chapter 5. • Seva Gunitsky, “How Do You Measure ‘Democracy’?,” https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/06/23/how-do-you-measure-democracy
Week 6 May 8 - May 10 Assignment #2 Due: May 15	Introduction to R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Political Analysis Using R</i>, Chapters 1-3. • CRAN: https://cran.r-project.org/ • The R Graph Gallery, “Data Art,” http://www.r-graph-gallery.com/portfolio/data-art/
Week 7 May 15 - May 17 Midterm Exam: May 17	Catch-up and Review	
Week 8 May 22 - May 24	Probability and Statistical Inference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fundamentals of Political Science Research</i>, Chapter 6. • Nate Silver, “How I Acted Like A Pundit And Screwed Up On Donald Trump,” http://53eig.ht/1W25sBn • Nate Silver, “Why FiveThirtyEight Gave Trump A Better Chance Than Almost Anyone Else,” http://53eig.ht/2fkn7oi
Week 9 May 29 - May 31 Assignment #3 Due: June 1	Correlation and Bivariate Regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fundamentals of Political Science Research</i>, Chapters 7-8. • <i>Political Analysis Using R</i>, Chapter 5. • <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, “Beware Spurious Correlations,” https://hbr.org/2015/06/beware-spurious-correlations

Week 10 June 5 - June 7 Assignment #4 Due: June 8	Multiple Regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fundamentals of Political Science Research</i>, Chapters 9-10. • <i>Political Analysis Using R</i>, Chapter 6. • Matthew L. Jacobsmeier and Daniel C. Lewis, "Barking Up the Wrong Tree: Why Bo Didn't Fetch Many Votes for Barack Obama in 2012," <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i> 46: 49-59.
Exam Week Final Exam: Tuesday, June 12 10:30a.m.-12:30p.m.		