

# INTL 6010: Research Methods in International Policy

## Fall 2021

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Course Webpage: UGA eLearning Commons

**Class Meeting Time:** Tuesdays, 9:35AM-12:20PM

**Class Location:** 214 International Affairs Building (202 Herty Drive)

**Goal of the Course:** The goal of this course is to help you understand how we study politics and policy and to provide guidance in conducting original research. The course will provide you with a general understanding of what science is and a foundation in the logic and practice of systematic social science inquiry. In addition to discussing general questions about the philosophy of science, we will cover fundamental issues such as arriving at a research question, theory building, hypothesis development, variable measurement, and identifying and dealing with confounding factors, and causality. We will then move to quantitative analysis; topics covered will include statistical inference, bivariate relationships, and multivariate relationships. The student should leave with an understanding of how to conduct his or her own research and a solid foundation for reading scholarly literature in political science and international policy.

### Required Readings:

Kellstedt, Paul M., and Guy D. Whitten. 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (KW)

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Putnam)

Several journal articles, all of which are available online for free

### Student Responsibilities and Grade Breakdown:

**Readings:** Students are required to do the readings for each class period ahead of time. Each week, students should write a short memo summarizing the readings for each class ahead of time. They should then refer to the memo during discussion.

**Participation:** As this is a graduate seminar, your participation is crucial and will count for 10% of your grade. Your involvement toward the end of the semester, when we will critique the research designs of students in the class, is particularly important.

**Research Design and Presentation:** A critical assignment in the course is a research design, which includes a research question, theory and literature review, hypotheses, variable operationalization and measurement, dependent and independent variables, and what your expected findings would be if you were to actually conduct the research. (If you are able, you are encouraged to actually conduct analyses.) You will present your design toward the end of the semester. The research design will count for 25% of your grade. Note that a one-page summary of your research design is due in class midway through the semester.

**Exams:** There will be two exams, each of which will count for 30% of your grade.

**Homework Assignment:** There will be one, rather long homework assignment handed out in the second half of the semester. This can be turned in any time on or before the day of the second exam. It will count for 5% of your grade. The purpose of the homework is to help you prepare for the second exam. You should approach me with any questions you have about the homework questions.

**Grade Scale:**

>=93%:	A
90-92.99%:	A-
87-89.99%:	B+
83-86.99%:	B
80-82.99%:	B-
77-79.99%:	C+
73-76.99%:	C
70-72.99%:	C-
60-69.99%:	D
<60%:	F

**Late/Missed Assignments:** Missed assignments will result in a zero without a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency. Students will be penalized for late assignments; 20% of the grade for each day late without a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency. Make-up exams can be arranged with the instructor with a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency.

**Mental Health and Wellness Resources:** If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services. UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>). If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

**Academic Integrity:** The academic honesty policy of the university is supplemented (not replaced) by an Honor Code which was adopted by the Student Government Association and approved by the University Council May 1, 1997, and provides: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” All students agree to abide by this code by signing the UGA Admissions Application.

**Readings and Course Schedule:** *The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

**Readings with a “\*” in front are optional**

## **WEEK 1**

### **August 24: Welcome and Introduction**

The Edicts of Candler Hall

## **WEEK 2**

### **August 31: The Scientific Study of Politics and Policy**

KW, Chapter 1

Putnam, Chapter 1 (an example of selecting and formulating a research agenda)

## **WEEK 3**

### **September 7: Theory, Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables**

KW, Chapter 2

Skim: Burlacu, Diana. 2020. Corruption and Ideological Voting. *British Journal of Political Science* 50 (2): 435-56. (a good comparative politics example with clear hypotheses and variables)

Skim: Cassese, Erin C. 2020. Straying from the Flock? A Look at How Americans’ Gender and Religious Identities Cross-Pressure Partisanship. *Political Research Quarterly* 73 (1): 169-83. (a good American politics example with clear hypotheses and variables)

Skim: Fuhrmann, Matthew. 2009. Spreading Temptation: Proliferation and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreements. *International Security* 34 (1): 7-41. (a good international relations example with clear hypotheses and variables)

## **WEEK 4**

### **September 14: Operationalization and Measurement**

KW, Chapter 5 and pages 125-130 of Chapter 6

Putnam, Chapter 3 (an example of operationalization and measurement)

\*McDonald, Michael P., and Samuel L. Popkin. 2001. The Myth of the Vanishing Voter. *American Political Science Review* 95 (4): 963-974. (an example of how measurement decisions can affect substantive conclusions)

## **WEEK 5**

### **September 21: Causality and Relationships between Variables**

KW, Chapter 3

## **WEEK 6**

### **September 28: No Class (APSA Meetings in Seattle)**

## **WEEK 7**

### **October 5: Experimental and Observational Designs**

KW, all of Chapter 4 but Section 4.4

Putnam, Chapter 4 (Putnam's theory testing chapter)

Skim: Gerber, Alan S, and Donald P. Green. 2000. The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review* 94 (3): 653-663. (an example that will inform our discussion of internal validity)

## **WEEK 8**

### **October 12: Exam 1**

## **WEEK 9**

### **October 19: Sampling and Surveys**

*Homework assignment available on eLC*

KW, Chapter 7

\*<https://www.economist.com/international/2018/05/26/plunging-response-rates-to-household-surveys-worry-policymakers> (an article on the perils of declining survey response rates)

## **WEEK 10**

### **October 26: Descriptive Statistics and Statistical Inference**

*Upload one-page research design summaries to eLC*

KW, pages 130-139 of Chapter 6, Chapter 7 again, and section 8.3 of Chapter 8

## **WEEK 11**

### **November 2: Bivariate Relationships**

*Sign up for research design presentation days*

KW, skim Chapter 8 and read Chapter 9 in depth

Putnam, Chapter 4 again, skim it (Putnam's theory testing chapter, which includes several bivariate examinations)

## **WEEK 12**

### **November 9: Multivariate Relationships**

KW, Chapter 10 and pages 246-258 of Chapter 11

\*Brambor, Thomas, William Roberts Clark, and Matt Golder. 2006. Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses. *Political Analysis* 14 (1): 63-82. (provides excellent guidance for testing conditional hypotheses with multiple regression)

## **WEEK 13**

### **November 16: Exam 2**

*Homework due via eLC*

## **WEEK 14**

### **November 23: Presentation of Research Designs**

## **WEEK 15**

### **November 30: Presentation of Research Designs**

## **FINALS WEEK**

### **December 15: Research design papers due by 5:00PM, uploaded to eLC**