

Course POL 334 A
Course Title Research Design and Methods
Professor Whitney Manzo
Term Spring 2019
Meetings MW 2-3:20 PM



Professor's Contact Information

Office Phone	Ext. 8540
Office Location	Joyner 224
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Office Hours	1-2 PM MW, 2-3 PM T/Th, or by appointment

General Course Information

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions	None
Course Description	<p>This course provides a broad overview of the nature of inquiry in political science and is intended to give students an understanding of how to do empirical research. Students will finish the course knowing how philosophy of science, research design, and statistical and causal inference are understood in the discipline of political science. To be taken during semester before POL 498/9.</p> <p>*This course satisfies the Information Literacy requirement of General Education.</p>
Learning Outcomes	<p>This course is designed to help you learn how to perform rigorous political science research, utilizing a variety of methods, in preparation for the writing of your final thesis in POL 498/9 or completing an advanced fieldwork project in POL 480. You may even begin work on your final thesis/fieldwork project in this class, if you already have an idea of what you'd like to do.</p> <p>The course learning outcomes are for you to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain social science research processes and the primary research methods of the field. (Social Science learning outcome #2) 2. Learn how to complete a political science research project, from articulating a research question and gathering information to analyzing data and presenting results. (Social Science learning outcome #3 and Information Literacy learning outcome #1) 3. Evaluate information and sources critically and decide whether initial question should be revised. (Information Literacy learning outcome #2)

Required Texts & Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Political Science Research Methods</i> (8th ed) by Janet Buttolph Johnson, H.T. Reynolds, and Jason D. Mycoff. CQ Press, 2015. ISBN-13: 978-1-5063-0782-4 2. <i>Working with Political Science Research Methods: Problems and Exercises</i> (4th ed) by Jason D. Mycoff. CQ Press, 2015. ISBN-13: 978-1-5063-0671-1 3. A small amount of material may be placed on Brightspace. 4. 3 blue books for exams <p>You will also need access to the internet, a word processing program, and Meredith gmail (you should check this every morning).</p>
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Assignment Weight and Descriptions

Grade Breakdown	<p>100 points Attendance 100 points Class Participation 175 points Assignments 225 points Written Exams (3) 300 points Research Project (3 steps) <u>100 points</u> Presentation of Research Project 1000 points Total</p>
Attendance	<p>Attendance is expected at all class meetings, and I will be taking attendance each class period. However, I also understand that life happens and I really do not want you coming to class unable to focus or sick. You have one free absence, no questions asked. After that, each additional absence will deduct 10 points from your attendance grade. You can have the 10 points restored if you provide evidence you got notes from a classmate and/or took written notes over the assigned reading from the day you missed. (School-sponsored activities are exempt from this policy.)</p>
Class Participation	<p>This grade includes but is not limited to contribution to class discussion and active participation in group work/group assignments.</p>
Assignments	<p>This grade includes but is not limited to assigned worksheets, short papers, and/or problem sets.</p>
Written Exams	<p>There will be three short answer/essay exams throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to provide the blue books for these exams, and you must write them in pen.</p>
Research Project	<p>As the goal of this course is to prepare you for writing your senior capstone, we will practice the first steps of a research project. Done correctly, this project will lead you to be ready to write your final thesis or advanced fieldwork paper in the next semester. There will be 3 steps, and guidelines for each may be found on Brightspace. The point value for each step is listed next to it.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research question and hypothesis- 50 points 2. Annotated bibliography- 100 points 3. Research project- 150 points
Presentation of Research Project	<p>During our final exam period, each student will present her research project. You will need to adjust your written work into an engaging presentation for an audience; simply reading your final outline will result in a 0 for this grade. The presentation must be between 6-8</p>

	minutes and involve an interesting powerpoint. The rubric for this presentation may be found on Brightspace.
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Course Calendar

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments
January 9	Introduction	
January 14	Empiricism	JRM Ch. 2
January 16	Research Skills in the Library	
January 21	No class, MLK Day	
January 23-28	Topics and Literature Review	JRM Ch. 3
January 30	Research Skills in the Library	
February 4	Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables	JRM Ch. 4 Research Question Due
February 6	Measurement	JRM Ch. 5
February 11-13	Research Design	JRM Ch. 6
February 18	Ethics in Political Science Research	Fujii (2012) on Brightspace
February 20	Exam #1	
February 25	No class, professor out	
February 27	Sampling	JRM Ch. 7
March 4	Observations	JRM Ch. 8
March 6	Qualitative Research	On Brightspace
March 11-13	No class, Spring Break	
March 18	Document Analysis	JRM Ch. 9 Annotated Bibliography Due
March 20	Case Studies and Process Tracing	M&S Ch. 3 on Brightspace
March 25-27	Survey Research	JRM Ch. 10
April 1	Exam #2	
April 3	Secondary Data Analysis	
April 8-10	Statistics: First Steps	JRM Ch. 11
April 15	Research project discussion	
April 17-22	Working with Data in Excel	
April 24	Exam #3	
Monday, May 6 from 1-4 pm	Final Presentations	Research Project Due by 1 PM

Course Policies

Letter Grade Requirements	<p>A: 900-1000 points B: 800-899 points C: 700-799 points D: 600-699 points F: 599 or fewer points</p> <p>I moved to a point system in order to offer clarity at all times in the course as to what you need to do to achieve the grade you want. This also means there will be NO rounding; the points you get = the letter grade listed here, period.</p>
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Extra Credit	Any extra credit will be offered at my discretion.
Makeup Work	Papers and assignments may be turned in late, and will lose 10% each day they are late. Exams may be made up if you have a valid excuse for missing the exam and notify me in advance that you will be absent. In-class activities cannot be made up. Similarly, the Research Project Presentations will be done on our final exam period, so they cannot be made up.
Inclement Weather	You can expect for us to hold class unless the school closes due to unsafe conditions. You can check your Meredith email and/or the Meredith website or Facebook page for school closure messages. However, I do not want you to risk your life to get to class- final judgment on this matter rests in your hands.
Food, Drink, Laptops, Cell Phones	Food and drink will be allowed so long as they do not become distracting. Laptops will be allowed for note taking, but I reserve the right to ask you to put it away if you clearly are not taking notes or otherwise working on class work. Cell phone usage is banned during class time except for extreme emergencies.
Classroom Citizenship	We will have lots of discussion in this course, and politics is by nature highly contentious. However, it is essential that every student be polite and courteous to other students, even if they are expressing views that offend or anger you. I will encourage scholarly debate of justifiable opinions, but not disparaging remarks or personal attacks. If I feel you have crossed the line, you will be asked to leave class and your participation points will be marked down.
Course Drop Dates	If you decide you cannot complete this course for whatever reason, you may withdraw. You must initiate this process with the Registrar's Office, I cannot do it for you. If you fail to meet the last drop date, you will receive a grade for this course, usually an "F". Last day to drop without a "W": Tuesday, January 15, 2019 Last day to drop with a "W": Wednesday, March 27, 2019
Meredith Honor Code	We, the Meredith Community, are committed to developing and affirming in each student a sense of personal honor and responsibility. Uncompromising honesty and forthrightness are essential elements of this commitment. The Honor System is a method by which individual honors are protected and maintained. Any dishonorable action will be regarded as a violation of this commitment, and corrective action will be taken. If I am in violation of the Honor Code, to prevent jeopardizing the Honor System or weakening our system of self-government, I have an obligation to report myself to the proper authorities. If I am aware of a violation of the Honor System by another student, I shall call this matter to the attention of that student as a violation of responsibility to the community. In choosing Meredith College, I am accepting the Honor System as a way of life. As a Meredith student, I am responsible for insuring that the Honor System is at all times carried out.

Disability Statement	Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive accommodations, students must go through the Counseling Center/Disability Services office. Disability Services is located in Carroll Hall and can be reached at (919)760-8427 or disabilityservices@meredith.edu . For additional information see the Disability Services website .
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The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.