

Point Loma Nazarene University
Department of History and Political Science
Political Science 2070: Scope and Methods



Instructor: Dr. Lindsey Lupo
Office: Colt Hall 115
Office Hours: Mondays and Fridays from 12:15-1:20pm on Zoom. Feel free to set up an appointment too!
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Semester: Fall 2020
Course Time: MWF 12:15-1:20pm
Course website: Canvas.pointloma.edu

Class Location: Online

"Political science is the study of politics through the procedures of science." – Robert O. Keohane

"Those who plow social science fields seek general truths. We look for general, or at least widespread, patterns of behavior; we seek general causes and effects. And yet we all know that everything, everywhere, is different... Can one find universals across nations or regions or cultures, or is each place different?" – Sidney Verba

PLNU Mission:

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Department of History and Political Science Mission:

As followers of Christ, the Department of History and Political Science promotes wisdom and scholarship about historical contexts and political systems, so that graduates can become local and global leaders in the service of Christ and humanity.

Course Description:

This course offers an examination of the scope of the discipline of political science and the research methods used in the study of political phenomena. In other words, this is a course about the extent to which we can make claims about the political world (scope) and the scientific methods we use to make such claims (methods). It is designed to engage students in the process of studying politics, helping them to discover how knowledge about the political world is created. Is political science (and its sub-

discipline international studies) a “science” as we understand the word? How do we know what we know about the political world? If we are truly interested in solving social problems and making the world better, how do we find answers? Which research method is best for each type of question? What are the practical problems involved in conducting research? We will seek to answer these and other questions in this course. The overarching goals are to prepare students to be critical consumers of research and better prepared to conduct research of their own.

Course Format and Expectations:

This course will meet synchronously once per week. The other two scheduled days will be dedicated to attending optional office hours, watching pre-recorded lectures, and completing assignments.

Over the semester, we will cover the theoretical motivations driving most political research, the structure and design of inquiry, general areas of research, and numerous analytic techniques common to the social sciences. Lectures, discussions, and exercises will draw on the readings and require students to apply this knowledge. Therefore, it is crucial that students complete all assigned readings and video watching on time, stay on top of assignments, more importantly, do everything they can to be live on Zoom with us one day a week.

To understand the expectations I have for my students, you must first understand my goals as a teacher. My aim in designing this course is to familiarize you with methodological terminology, techniques, and discourse. You will become budding social scientists, capable of conducting quality social science research.

Specifically, the course learning outcomes (CLOs) for the class include the following:

- Students will be able to recognize and employ the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss research methods.
- Students will understand why approaches to the study of politics are controversial and the rationale behind various approaches.
- Students will become familiar with methods of inquiry that are used to generate data in political science.
- Students will be able to recognize and employ basic statistical techniques that are used to analyze data in political science.
- Students will be able to critically read and evaluate primary political science research.
- Students will be able to discuss the value and validity of data and analysis used in specific political science research.
- Students will become comfortable with political science research methods and will propose the utilization of one or more methods for a final research design project.

This course will also help move you forward in your major. As such, the political science and international studies program learning outcomes (PLOs) that align with this course are:

- Evaluate, design, and apply social science research with respect to political phenomena (PS.PLO 2 and IS.PLO 1).
 - Assessed through: Research exercises 1-5; midterm exam; final paper
- Demonstrate social scientific information literacy (PS.PLO 4 and IS.PLO 3).
 - Assessed through: Research exercises 1 and 2; final paper

- Develop and express ideas in written communication in an effective and scholarly manner (PS.PLO 5 and IS.PLO 4).
 - Assessed through: Research exercises 4 and 5; midterm exam; final paper
- Demonstrate oral communication abilities, particularly to convey complex ideas, recognize diverse viewpoints, and offer empirical evidence of an argument (PS.PLO 6 and IS.PLO 5).
 - Assessed through: Final paper presentations

To be sure, these are ambitious goals. However, in my experience students are more than able to achieve them. Indeed, with hard work they often exceed them! As such, the basic expectation I have is that you will work hard in this course. I promise to do the same.

A word to the wise: This class is challenging, but you can do this. The best way to survive in good standing is to be very diligent from the beginning, rather than assuming you can catch up later. Do the reading and assignments, come to every live Zoom class unless there is absolutely no way to avoid missing, attend office hours, begin your final research design early, *and see me early and often if you have any questions or need any help at all*. This class will push you, but I will offer any help and support I can to make this a positive experience.

Course Readings:

All readings are required and are available through the bookstore or on Canvas.

1. Rich, Richard C., Craig Leonard Brians, Jarol B. Manheim, and Lars Willnat (hereafter RBMW). 2018 (9th edition). *Empirical Political Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*. New York: Routledge.
2. Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
3. Various electronic readings – they are available on Canvas.

Assessment Requirements:

Reading questions: We will be doing some challenging reading for this class. I am going to ask you to submit reading questions intended to help you think about the reading and to give you regular practice with the more difficult concepts. Their purpose and intent is to ensure that you fully understand the reading, and thus to keep you moving toward your final research project. These reading questions are *due every day that a reading is assigned, beginning August 19 and through October 28* (after this date, we move onto preparing your final research design). Everyone gets 4 days “off” from doing a reading question (your choice as to when you take a day off). Each reading question is worth one point. Reading questions should be posted on our Canvas site and are due by the start of class. You may also respond to another student’s posted question – in other words, in order to earn a point, you may post an original question or respond to another.

Research Exercises: On five (5) days, you will have a homework assignment due. Some of these will stem from your RBMW text and others will be based on your reading of actual political science academic journal articles. On one of the days, you will have a research exercise due on an article of your choice. You will be deconstructing and analyzing the research design of this article. All of the research exercise prompts are posted on Canvas. The due dates appear in the schedule below.

Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will consist of 20 multiple choice questions and 2 short answer questions. You will not have a choice as to which multiple choice questions you answer but you will have a choice with the short answer questions. A study guide will be provided a few weeks before the exam.

SPSS Analysis Assignment: Democracy & Development: you will be analyzing the relationship between democratic government and development in states. Employing actual data from a large set of countries, you will evaluate this relationship. A set of “lab” pages provides the structure for your responses. It suggests how to conceptualize “democracy” and “development,” enabling you to generate a hypothesis about their relationship, guiding your construction of quantitative indices for each concept, and then showing you how to use the computer program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to do a simple statistical test of your hypothesized relationship. *You must collaborate with one other student on this assignment. You will submit a single assignment, with both names, and will receive the same grade.*

Final Research Design Paper: For your final project, you will be writing a paper that proposes research – in other words, you’ll be designing the project but not actually completing the research (we’d need another semester to do that!). The final paper prompt (with examples from previous students) is available on Canvas. The last part of this course will be dedicated to student presentations in which each of you presents your research design (perhaps not fully polished at presentation time – that’s okay) to your peers for comments, suggestions, and advice.

Participation and Attendance Policy: In this class, you are expected to attend live Zoom sessions, participate in partner projects, and contribute to the discussions and to each other’s research with your comments and suggestions. As your participation, general interest, and respect for your fellow classmates’ work increases, so does your participation grade. More specifically, grading on participation includes an assessment of the following: asking and answering questions, asking questions during the student presentations, being well-prepared for your presentation, visiting office hours, emailing me questions, attending Zoom sessions regularly, and arriving on time for any live sessions.

Finally, this semester is different but as always, my goal is to maximize our learning time and to always be as prepared for as possible. I return, I ask that you respect our time together, do your best, and dedicate all you can to this course. I treat all my students as the adults that they are, thus I expect you to act accordingly. I recognize that you are soon-to-be young working professionals and graduate school students, and to help prepare you for this transition, I expect an academically engaged and professional approach from each of you. At a minimum, this includes arriving on time to live Zoom sessions, engaging in active listening and discussion, not texting, emailing, or using social media while on our Zoom calls (would you do these things in a business meeting?), and completing all assignments when due.

**All late assignments/exams will have points deducted unless notification and arrangements are made with me at least 24 hours prior to the assignment’s due date. The instructor reserves the right to change the structure of any make-up exam or assignment given. If you have some special circumstance that might affect your ability to meet all the course’s expectations – e.g., a sister’s graduation, a learning disability, or whatever – come and talk to me immediately. With abundant notice, I’ll be as accommodating as possible, as long as it does not compromise fairness for all.*

Grading:

Reading Questions	20 Points (1 Point Each)
Midterm Exam	40 Points
Research Exercises # 1-3	45 Points (15 Points Each)
Research Exercises #4-5	40 Points (20 points Each)
SPSS Analysis Assignment	30 Points
Research Design Paper	85 Points
Participation	20 Points
TOTAL	280 Points

Credit Hour Information:

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 4 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated minimum of 150 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

Schedule - Full citations appear at the end of the syllabus along with URLs if available. The non-text readings are on the course Canvas site. Please complete the reading assignment before coming to class on the day it is assigned.

Date	Format	Topic	Assignments
		<i>Foundations of Political Science Research</i>	
<i>Week 1</i>			
August 17	Pre-recorded video	Introduction to the course - welcome!	No reading
August 19	Live Zoom session	Scientific development	Kuhn, pages 52-65 First reading question due on Canvas by 12:15pm
August 21	Pre-recorded video	How "scientific" is social science? Overview of the research process	RBMW, chapter 1; Lynch article; Desch article
<i>Week 2</i>			
August 24	Pre-recorded video	Trends in Political Science Research	Hoover & Donovan, pgs. 6-12 and pgs. 161-190
August 26	Live Zoom session	Theories and Hypotheses Part I	RBMW, chapter 2 Research Exercise #1 Due (Submit on Canvas) by 11:59pm
August 28	Pre-recorded video	Theories and Hypotheses Part II	Van Evera, pages 7-27; 35-48

<i>Week 3</i>			
August 31	Pre-recorded video	Foundations of Research – Library Visit	RBMW, chapter 3
September 2	Live Zoom session	The Pluses and Perils of Internet Research; Avoiding Plagiarism	Browse the website www.plagiarism.org
September 4	Pre-recorded video	Operationalization and Measurement	RBMW, pgs. 69-75 and chapter 5; Sanger, Shanker, and Schmitt article
<i>Week 4</i>			
September 7	Pre-recorded video	Preparing to do Research	RBMW, chapter 6
September 9	Live Zoom session	Choosing a Research Question Part I	UNC “Annotated Bibliography” website (no reading question due today) Research Exercise #2 Due (Submit paper and the full article on Canvas) by 11:59pm
September 11	Pre-recorded video	Choosing a Research Question Part II	No reading...BUT, bring to class a potential research question and annotated bibliography (2 sources only) for your final research design paper.
<i>Week 5</i>			
September 14	Pre-recorded video	Sampling	RBMW, chapter 7
September 16	Live Zoom session	Sampling (Day 2)	No reading
<i>Quantitative Methods</i>			
September 18	Pre-recorded video	Survey Research	RBMW, chapter 8; Rochefort, chapter 9 (Authors: Traugott, et al)
<i>Week 6</i>			
September 21	Pre-recorded video	Scaling	RBMW, chapter 9
September 23	Live Zoom session	Content Analysis	RBMW, chapter 10
September 25	Pre-recorded video	Comparative Research	RBMW, chapter 12 Research Exercise #3 Due (can be completed as a pair or individually; submit on Canvas) by 11:59pm

<i>Week 7</i>			
September 28	Pre-recorded video	Aggregate Data	RBMW, chapter 11
September 30	Take timed exam on your own	Midterm Exam	No reading – study for today’s exam!
October 2	Pre-recorded video	Data Preparation, Processing, and Description	RBMW, chapters 13-14
<i>Week 8</i>			
October 5	Pre-recorded video	Statistics I: Univariate Statistics	RBMW, chapter 15; Gould Article
October 7	Live Zoom session	Statistics II: Bivariate Statistics	RBMW, chapter 16; Rochefort, chapter 7 (Authors: Russett, Hartlet, and Murray) Be sure to continue thinking about your final research question – is it finalized? Do you have your variables? Are you reading some <i>academic</i> (peer-reviewed, scholarly, high-quality) literature in this field? Now is the time to see me if you have questions or need help.
October 9	Pre-recorded video	Statistics II: Bivariate Statistics (Part II)	Fowler article
<i>Week 9</i>			
October 12	Pre-recorded video	SPSS Analysis Assignment	No reading Research Exercise #4 Due (Submit on Canvas) by 11:59pm
October 14	Live Zoom session	SPSS Analysis Assignment	No reading
October 16	Pre-recorded video	SPSS Analysis Assignment	No reading SPSS Analysis Due by 11:59pm
		<i>Qualitative Methods</i>	
<i>Week 10</i>			
October 19	Pre-recorded video	Introduction to Qualitative Methods	RBMW, pages 75-81; King, Keohane, and Verba, pgs. 3-12

			<i>By this point, you should have your final research question solidified, your theory formulated, and an idea of how you will operationalize your variables in your final research project.</i>
October 21	Live Zoom session	Direct Observation	RBMW, chapter 18
October 23	Pre-recorded video	Focus Groups	RBMW, chapter 19
<i>Week 11</i>			
October 26	Pre-recorded video	Case Studies	Van Evera, pages 49-67
October 28	Live Zoom session	Elite and Specialized Interviews	RBMW, chapter 20; Rochefort, chapter 5 (Authors: Rivera, Kozyreva, and Sarovskii) <i>Last day of submitting a daily reading question</i>
October 30	Pre-recorded video	Literature Reviews	Lawrence piece; Steinberg piece; Article from Rochefort reader that has not yet been assigned; Optional reading: UNC "Literature Reviews" website <i>By this point, you should have your final research question solidified, your theory formulated, your variables operationalized, and your research methods selected for your final research project. <u>You should also be deep into the academic literature that surrounds this topic.</u></i>
		<i>Preparing your Research Design</i>	
<i>Week 12</i>			
November 2	Pre-recorded video	Sample Research Reports	RBMW, chapter 21

November 4	Live Zoom session	Writing a Political Science Paper	Van Evera, appendix; UNC "Writing in Political Science" website Please come to our class session with a written copy of your research question and proposed methodology
November 6	Pre-recorded video	Overview of Concepts	RBMW, chapter 22 Research Exercise #5 Due (Submit on Canvas) by 11:59pm
<i>Week 13</i>			
November 9	Live Zoom session	Student research presentations	No reading - work on your research design
November 11	Live Zoom session	Student research presentations	No reading - work on your research design
November 13	Live Zoom session	Student research presentations	No reading - work on your research design
<i>Week 14</i>			
November 16	Live Zoom session	Student research presentations	No reading - work on your research design
November 18	Live Zoom session	Student research presentations	No reading - work on your research design
November 20	Live Zoom session	Student research presentations	No reading - work on your research design
<i>Week 15</i>			
November 23	No class	Work on your own	No reading - work on your research design
November 25-27	No class	Thanksgiving Break	No reading - work on your research design but also spend time with family and friends!
<i>Final Exams Week</i>			
Tuesday, December 1		We made it!	Final Research Design Paper due by 11:59pm on Canvas.

Full Citations

Desch, Michael C. 2019. "[How Political Science Became Irrelevant: The Field Turned its Back on the Beltway.](#)" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 27, 2019.

Fowler, James H. 2008. "[The Colbert Bump in Campaign Donations: More Truthful than Truthy.](#)" *PS: Political Science and Politics* XLI, no. 3 (July): 533-539.

Gould, Stephen Jay. 2013. "[The Median Isn't the Message.](#)" *AMA Journal of Ethics*, January 2013.

Hoover, Kenneth and Todd Donovan. 2004. *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*. Toronto, Canada: Thomson Wadsworth.

Lawrence, Christopher N. 2011. "[Writing a Literature Review in the Social Sciences](#)," October 11, 2011.

Lynch, Marc. March 23, 2016. "[After the Political Science Relevance Revolution.](#)" *Washington Post*, March 23, 2016.

Rocheftort, David A. 2005. *Quantitative Methods in Practice: Readings in PS*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Sanger, David E., Thom Shanker, and Eric Schmitt. 2009. "[Obama Offers Ways to Rate Efforts in Afghan Region.](#)" *New York Times*, September 17, 2009.

Steinberg, G. "[Rhetoric II: Sample Literature Reviews.](#)"

Course Website and Email:

Please check your PLNU email regularly for class announcements. You should also check Canvas for announcements, links, lecture PowerPoints, and assignments.

State Authorization:

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

Incompletes and Late Assignments:

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

PLNU Copyright Policy:

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy:

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy:

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic adjustments, modifications or auxiliary aids/services. At Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), these students are requested to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center (DRC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). The DRC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. After the student files the required documentation, the DRC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to meet that student's specific learning needs. The DRC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. The AP must be implemented in all such courses. If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all of the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course. PLNU highly recommends that DRC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy:

Synchronous Attendance/Participation Expectations

Regular and punctual attendance at all **synchronous** class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered **asynchronously** and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will

result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

Spiritual Care:

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the [Office of Spiritual Development](#)

Use of Technology:

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. If a student is in need of technological resources please contact student-tech-request@pointloma.edu. Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

Campus Resources:

Research librarians are available to help you with your research papers and projects in Ryan Library. You can reach them by phone at (619) 849-2337, by text at (619) 592-8884, or by email at reflib@pointloma.edu. To search the library for books and articles, please click here to visit their [main website](#).

The Wellness Center is available for medical, counseling and nutrition services to students. Many college students experience strained relationships, stress, anxiety, depression, physical health challenges, and other barriers to learning. The Wellness Center offers help and resources to deal with these kind of issues. The Wellness Center is located on the first floor of Nicholson Commons and is open Monday-Friday, 8 am-12:30 pm and 1:30-4 pm. They can be reached at sdwellnesscenter@pointloma.edu or at (619) 849-2574. In an emergency after hours, call 911 and PLNU Public Safety at (619) 849-2525.

Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972) protects your right to an educational experience that is free from sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep any information you share private to the greatest extent possible. You should know that I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under PLNU policy and federal law, and am required to share any information I receive regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, and related conduct with PLNU's Title IX Coordinator.

PLNU strives to provide a learning and living environment that promotes safety, transparency, personal integrity, civility, mutual respect, and freedom from unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment. Detailed information on discrimination, harassment, and sexual assault policies and processes for getting help and for reporting are available at <https://www.pointloma.edu/title-ix>. PLNU's Title IX Coordinator is Dr. Caye Smith, Vice President for Student Development (619-849-2479,

Room 303 Nicholson Commons). The Title IX office will seek to maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible, but cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Students can receive *confidential* support (with the exception of a few critical situations) from the Wellness Center (619-849-2574) or campus pastors in the Office of Spiritual Development (619-849-2655).
