Political Science 475.001: Special Problems – Advanced Research in Political Science
Spring Semester 2017
Department of Government, SFASU
Course Meeting Time: TBA
Course Location: Dugas Liberal Arts North 134
Instructor: Dr. Steven E. Galatas
Office Location: Liberal Arts North (LAN) 134
Office Hours: MWF 10:00 – 10:50 a.m. and MTWR 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.;
and by appointment.
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Course Description:

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes:
This course is associated with the major and minor in political science. The course is not part of the
general education core curriculum. No specific general education objectives or outcomes are addressed in this
course.

Program Learning Outcomes:
The following program learning outcomes for a political science major are addressed in this course:
PLO #1 – The students will clearly articulate hypotheses
PLO #2 – The student will critically analyze and critique political institutions and / or
complex political issues.
PLO #3 – The student will demonstrate oral communication skills.
PLO #4 – The student will develop research skills.
PLO #5 – The student will execute a well-developed research paper.

Student Learning Outcomes:
By the end of the course, you will be able to:
• Develop and frame a significant research question
• Explain the appropriate research tools to answer the research question
• Demonstrate mastery of an analytical approach, methodology, or statistical technique associated
  with political science research
• Discuss the essential elements of a research paper in the discipline
• Explain the problems associated with manuscript editing and proofreading
• Evaluate the importance of research design to political science

Overview of the Research Project:
For this semester, the focus of the course is on the final development of your research and writing skills
as an undergraduate. To this end, you will engage in original research on some key issue or topic associated with
political science. You will then communicate your research both in written and oral formats. The goal is to
produce a research paper equivalent to that of a first year graduate students in political science. This course is a
substitute for PSC 490: Senior Seminar.

While these skills may seem to focus on developing skills associated with the scholarly world of the
university, the skills in research, data analysis, written communication, and oral communication are applicable to
the world outside of the university. SFASU political science graduates who are employed in public and
government service, non-profit entities, law, and private businesses have found these skills essential to their success outside of the university in their chosen career paths.

Original research in this course means conducting research utilizing primary source materials. Therefore, you must perform one or more of the following tasks: 1) collect and analyze new or existing data using appropriate statistical techniques; 2) conduct archival research and examine primary source documentation (personal papers, etc. of an individual or individuals of interest); 3) conduct surveys or executive interviews of public officials; 4) examine court cases and court decisions. Other possible original source materials maybe accepted on a case-by-case basis.

In all cases, you are expected to use an appropriate methodology for analysis. Methodologies include statistical techniques, case studies, comparative methods, and literary criticism. Some of these methodologies are expected to carry over from PSC 303: Political Research Methods; other methodologies can be mastered relatively easily at least at a level of competence for PSC 490 during the semester.

Remember that PSC 490: Senior Seminar is required for all political science majors at SFASU. Earning a grade of “F” prohibits you from graduating. This requirement of a grade of “D” or higher applied to this course as well. You must pass this course to graduate.

Course Textbooks:
Two Textbooks are required for this course.


In addition, you must use the writing style guide, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you do not yet possess this manual, copies are available at the university bookstore and off-campus bookstores.

Additional readings will be assigned based upon individual student research projects.

Grades:
Grades for the course will be assigned based upon the following methods of assessment.

Research Paper
Initial Abstract of Research 25 points
Working Bibliography 50 points
Rough Draft of Literature Review 100 points
Rough Draft of Data and Methods 40 points
Rough Draft of Analysis / Discussion 60 points
Final Draft of Research Paper 125 points
TOTAL 400 points

Oral Presentation of Research 50 points

Total 450 points

Grades will be converted to a letter grade based upon the following scale:

A 405 – 450 points (90.0% – 100.0%)
B 360 – 404 points (80.0% – 89.9%)
C 315 – 359 points (70.0% – 79.9%)
D 270 – 314 points (60.0% – 69.9%)
F 0 – 269 points (0.0% – 59.9%)

Course grades for the entire class are not curved or adjusted at the end of the semester. Extra credit work is not permitted.
**Initial Abstract of Research:**

You will develop an abstract for your research project. Your abstract will state the initial research question or hypothesis to be examined. In addition, you will provide a brief sketch of the methodological approach that will be used to answer the question or test related hypothesis. Formatting details will be provided in the first weeks of the semester. Moreover, your abstract will be revised and resubmitted throughout the course. Your initial abstract will be submitted in hard copy to the professor by **10:00 a.m. on Friday, September 22, 2017.** Any abstract not submitted at that time will not be accepted. The Initial Abstract is worth twenty-five (25) points.

**Working Bibliography:**

You will submit a working bibliography for your research project. The working bibliography will be an annotated bibliography, providing a brief summary of the work and its relationship to your research project. Your working bibliography must contain at least twelve (12) sources relevant to your research topic. The bibliography will consist of a combination of scholarly books and journal articles that provide essential information regarding the research question or hypothesis. In addition, you may include government documents, relevant data sets and sources of data, and other academic sources. Use of newspaper articles, magazine stories, and other information may be approved on a case-by-case basis at the prior approval of the instructor. Such sources will be allowed only when absolutely necessary for the research project. Because this is a scholarly endeavor, online documents and websites are to be employed only with the prior approval of the instructor and only when of sufficient scholarship to merit inclusion. Government documents, data sets, and scholarly journal articles stored in electronic format online are acceptable.

Formatting for the bibliography must follow the standards for citation outlined in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.* Failure to provide full and complete citation formats for each and every source constitutes plagiarism. You have been forewarned.

Your working bibliography must be submitted in hard copy to the instructor by **10:00 a.m. on Friday, September 29, 2017.** Any bibliography not submitted by the beginning of class will not be accepted. The working bibliography is worth fifty (50) points.

**Rough Draft of Literature Review:**

A rough draft of the literature review for the research paper will be submitted to the professor for comment and revision. The rough draft must include each of the following elements:

- A title page
- A revised abstract on a separate page from the title page and from the main body of the paper
- An introductory paragraph or section that includes the research question for the paper
- The literature review
- A section that derives from the literature review hypotheses related to the research question
- A revised bibliography that contains a complete citation for each and every work referenced in the literature review

Formatting of the paper, including font size, margins, citations, endnotes/footnotes, etc. must conform to the standards presented in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.*

Your rough draft will be graded based upon the following criteria:

- Hypotheses formulation
  - You articulate a clear research question
  - You utilize the appropriate political science literature and theories
  - You derive hypotheses from the literature and theories
- Analytical skills
  - You fully describe the political institution or political issue
  - You correctly place the institution or issue in the context of political science literature
- Research execution skills
Your paper contains clear language and avoids colloquialisms
• Your paper contains language that is precise and effective
• Your paper is well-organized and coherent

You must submit the rough draft of the literature review electronically on the course’s D2L website by 10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 20, 2017. If your paper is not uploaded to D2L by that time, you will be penalized one letter grade. Late papers will be penalized one additional letter grade per day until the paper is uploaded or a grade of “F” has been incurred. The rough draft of the literature review is worth one hundred (100) points.

Rough Draft of Data and Methods Section:
You will submit a rough draft of the data and methods section of your paper. This section, while somewhat brief, must describe the data that is used in your research paper. This description must also define your independent and dependent variables as well as other variables of interest. You will also discuss the methodologies used in your paper and provide explanation as to why the methods are appropriate for your data.

This section must include each of the following elements:
• A title page
• A revised abstract on a separate page from the title page and from the main body of the paper
• The data and methodology section
• A revised bibliography that contains a complete citation for each source of data or methodology used

Formatting of the paper, including font size, margins, citations, endnotes/footnotes, etc. must conform to the standards presented in the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

Your rough draft will be graded based upon the following criteria:
• Advanced research design skills
  • Your data is appropriate for your research question and hypotheses
  • Your methods are appropriate for your research questions and hypotheses
  • Your dependent and independent variables are correctly identified and measured
• Research execution skills
  • Your paper contains clear language and avoids colloquialisms
  • Your paper contains language that is precise and effective
  • Your paper is well-organized and coherent
  • Your research methods are well-suited for the subject of your paper

You must submit the rough draft of the data and methodology section electronically on the course’s D2L website by 10:00 a.m. on Friday, November 3, 2017. If your paper is not uploaded to D2L by that time, you will be penalized one letter grade. Late papers will be penalized one additional letter grade per day until the paper is uploaded or a grade of “F” has been incurred. The rough draft of the data and methodology section is worth forty (40) points.

Rough Draft of Analysis and Discussion Section:
You will submit a rough draft of the analysis and discussion section of your paper. This section provides the main point of your paper: the original research. This section discusses the analyses that you conducted, provides support for or evidence against your research question and your hypotheses, and concludes the paper by linking your research back into the literature presented in your literature review. A discussion of the limitations of your research and possible, future directions for research based upon your analyses is included in this section as well.

This section must include each of the following elements:
• A title page
• A revised abstract on a separate page from the title page and from the main body of the paper
• The analysis and discussion rough draft which includes
• Tables, charts, and graphs of data and data analyses
• Descriptions of tables, charts, and graphs
• Discussion of hypotheses tested, how tested, and results from each test
• Conclusions to the paper
• A revised bibliography that contains a complete citation for each source cited in this section

Formatting of the paper, including font size, margins, citations, endnotes/footnotes, etc. must conform to the standards presented in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.*

Your rough draft will be graded based upon the following criteria:

• Advanced research design skills
  • Your data is appropriate for your research question and hypotheses
  • Your methods are appropriate for your research questions and hypotheses
  • Your dependent and independent variables are correctly identified and measured

• Research execution skills
  • Your paper contains clear language and avoids colloquialisms
  • Your paper contains language that is precise and effective
  • Your paper is well-organized and coherent
  • Your research methods are well-suited for the subject of your paper
  • Your conclusion follows clearly from the arguments and evidence presented

You must submit the rough draft of the literature review electronically on the course’s D2L website by **10:00 a.m. on Friday 17, November, 2017.** If your paper is not uploaded to D2L by that time, you will be penalized one letter grade. Late papers will be penalized one additional letter grade per day until the paper is uploaded or a grade of “F” has been incurred. The rough draft of the analysis and discussion section is worth sixty (60) points.

**Final Draft of Paper:**

A final draft of your paper will be submitted by the end of the semester. Your final draft should be between 20 and 40 pages in length, including the supplemental and supporting materials listed below. The goal is not a specific length to the paper but rather a thorough attempt to pose and answer a research question. The final draft must incorporate any and all suggested changes and comments from your professor found in the feedback you receive from the working bibliography, rough draft of the literature review, rough draft of data and methodology section, and rough draft of the analysis and discussion section. Comments from peer reviewers may be incorporated as well.

Your final draft must contain:

• A title page
• A final abstract on a separate page from the title page and from the main body of the paper
• The final, revised research paper which includes at least
  • An introductory paragraph or section, including your research question
  • The literature review
  • Hypotheses related to the research question derived from the literature review
  • The data and methodology section with tables, charts, graphs, etc.
  • The analysis and discussion section, with conclusions
• Any endnotes or footnotes
• A final bibliography

Formatting of the paper, including font size, margins, citations, endnotes/footnotes, etc. must conform to the standards presented in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.*

Your final draft will be graded based upon the following criteria:

• Hypotheses formulation
  • You articulate a clear research question
• You utilize the appropriate political science literature and theories
• You derive hypotheses from the literature and theories

• Analytical skills
  • You fully describe the political institution or political issue
  • You correctly place the institution or issue in the context of political science literature

• Advanced research design skills
  • Your data is appropriate for your research question and hypotheses
  • Your methods are appropriate for your research questions and hypotheses
  • Your dependent and independent variables are correctly identified and measured

• Research execution skills
  • Your paper contains clear language and avoids colloquialisms
  • Your paper contains language that is precise and effective
  • Your paper is well-organized and coherent
  • Your research methods are well-suited for the subject of your paper
  • Your conclusion follows clearly from the arguments and evidence presented

You must submit the rough draft of the literature review electronically on the course’s D2L website by **10:00 a.m. on December 8, 2017.** If your paper is not uploaded to D2L by that time, you will be penalized one letter grade. Late papers will be penalized one additional letter grade per day until the paper is uploaded or a grade of “F” has been incurred. The final draft is worth one hundred twenty-five (125) points.

**Oral Presentation of Research:**
You will present your original research paper at a series of “panels” held during the final weeks of the semester. These panels will be organized thematically and will occur during at the regular class meeting time. A schedule of panels and meeting times will be provided toward the end of the semester. All political science majors and members of the political science faculty will be invited to attend and to participate in a question-and-answer session following the research presentations.

You are forewarned that the oral presentations are a significant factor in the grading of the course. You must be prepared for the oral presentation by practicing and observing time limitations. Each presentation will be approximately 12 minutes in length. Going too long or not long enough will negatively impact the grade for the oral presentation. You should summarize your research question, literature, methods of analysis, findings, and conclusion. Papers are not to be read verbatim!

Your presentation will be graded based upon the following criteria:
• Your language is clear and avoid colloquialisms
• Your language is clear, precise, and effective
• Your presentation is practiced and polished with professional body language and eye contact
• Your presentation is well-organized and coherent
• Your are appropriately dressed for the presentation

Your oral presentation is worth fifty (50) points.

A date for your oral presentation will be established during the semester.

**A Word About Technological Issues and Coursework:**
While students may encounter technological issues such as problems uploading assignments to D2L or printer problems, these issues are not valid excuses for submitting work after the deadlines listed in this syllabus. You should complete your assignments in a timely fashion so that if you encounter a printer problem, etc. you have sufficient time to overcome the problem before the deadline for submitting work. Waiting until just before class to print an assignment or upload an assignment is will not waive the late penalties listed in this syllabus.
Attendance:
You are expected to attend class. Because this course is an upper-division course, attendance will not be taken. However, students are expected to meet regularly with the instructor. Some of these meetings will occur in lieu of class sessions; others will occur outside of the normal class meeting times.
You must attend the sessions at which you and your fellow students present your research to the class, other political science majors, and any political science faculty who wish to attend.

Student Academic Dishonesty:
The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2017), section on “Student Academic Dishonesty.”
“Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members must promote the components of academic integrity in their instruction, and course syllabi are required to provide information about penalties for cheating and plagiarism, as well as the appeal process.
Definition of Academic Dishonesty:
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam; falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; helping or attempting to help other student(s) in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: submitting an assignment as one’s own work when it is at least partly the work of another person; submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper or presentation without giving the author credit.
Penalties for Academic Dishonesty:
Penalties may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, resubmission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.
Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf.
All cases of academic dishonesty will be handled according to University policies and procedures in the SFASU Policy Manual and other sources of policy. The consequences for academic dishonesty may range from a score of zero (0) on the assignment to an “F” for the course. For details, students should refer to the SFA Policy Manual (2017) or the University’s General Bulletin, 2017 – 2018 section entitled “Academic Integrity” and other sources of University policy.

Withheld Grades:
The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2017), “Course Grades Policy.” (Policy 5.5)
“At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.”

Students with Disabilities:
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Acceptable Student Behavior:
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional
forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full
discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class
regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare program. This program
provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students
succeed.
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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC AND READINGS</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Selecting a Research Topic</td>
<td>Schmidt Chpt. 1 – 3; Edwards, Chpt. 2</td>
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<td>September 15</td>
<td>Writing an Abstract</td>
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<td>September 22</td>
<td>Primary v. Secondary Research</td>
<td>Schmidt, Chpts. 4</td>
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<td>September 29</td>
<td>Writing a Literature Review</td>
<td>Schmidt, Chpts. 11 (pp. 230 -240)</td>
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<td>October 6</td>
<td>Writing a Literature Review</td>
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<td>October 13</td>
<td>Understanding, Synthesis, Application</td>
<td>Edwards, Chpts. 3, 4, and 7</td>
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<td>October 20</td>
<td>Evaluation and Analysis</td>
<td>Edwards, Chpts. 5 and 6</td>
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<td>October 27</td>
<td>Organization of Research Papers</td>
<td>Schmidt, Chpt. 6</td>
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<td>November 3</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary Data</td>
<td>Schmidt, Chpt. 5</td>
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<td>November 10</td>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
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<td>November 17</td>
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<td>December 1</td>
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<td>December 8</td>
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