**Political Science Y205. Political Analysis**
Meets Tuesday, Thursday, 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM   Woodburn 121
Section number 7266

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Office Hours: Monday 10:00-11:30, Wednesday 2:00-3:30,
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**Course Description**

**This course introduces students to the "science" part of "political science."** We will explore all steps needed for the application of the scientific method to the causes and consequences of politically relevant decisions and the wide array of conditions and contexts that shape those decisions and their consequences. Students will learn how to identify a "puzzle" or some normative concern from their observations of politics and sharpen it into a research question to which they can apply this method. They will learn how to posit alternative propositions or hypotheses, locate relevant sources of data, and conduct some preliminary steps of empirical analysis on that data. (The instructor and assistant instructor will be providing lots of guidance on these matters.)

**Students will be asked to submit a term paper on an approved research question** (from a wide range of possible topics), subject that question to the series of methodological steps covered in class, and summarize their conclusions. This paper will be written in parts over the semester, and will give each student a nice piece of evidence to hand to anyone who asks why we call it political ***science*** (and a useful example of their analytical capabilities to show to potential employers). We will use a basic textbook, a few other readings, exams, and other short assignments along the way.

This course is required for majors in political science, but there are no course prerequisites. Students are expected to come to this class with interests in something related to politics, and a willingness to explore how they might learn how to come up with concrete answers to at least some parts of the complex world of politics.

The core text for this course is Shively, W. Phillips. 2013. *The Craft of Political Research,* 9th edition. Boston: Pearson. ISBN 978-0-205-85462-2. Other readings will be available on the Canvas site.

**Schedule of Topics and Assignments\***

| Week | Date | Discussion Topics and Assignments |
|------|------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Jan. 12 | Overview of course |
| | 14 | *Why Bother?* Noel, Hans. 2010. "Ten Things Political Scientists Know that You Don't," *The Forum* 8(3), article 12 |
| 2 | 19 | *Overview of Types of Research in Political Science* Shively, W. Phillips, *The Craft of Political Research*, chapter 1 |
| | 21 | *Choosing a Topic* Shively, W. Phillips, *The Craft of Political Research*, chapter 2 |
| 3 | 26 | *The Benefits of Being Puzzled* |

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| | | Lave, Charles A., and James G. March. 1975. *An Introduction to Models in the Social Sciences,* chapters 1-3: 1-84. New York: Harper & Row **ASSIGNMENT: initial brief draft of research question and justification (not graded)** |
| | 28 | *Duverger's Law* Riker, William. 1982. "The Two-Party System and Duverger's Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science," *American Political Science Review*, 76,4 753-66 Benoit, Kenneth. 2006. "Duverger's Law and the Study of Electoral Systems" French Politics, 2006, 4, (69–83) |
| 4 | Feb. 2 | *Topic continued* |
| | 4 | *Puzzling through puzzles: an example* Craw, Michael. 2010. "Deciding to Provide: Local Decisions on Providing Social Welfare," *American Journal of Political Science***,** 54, 4, October, 906–920. **Extra Assignment: to be discussed in class** |
| 5 | 9 | *Puzzling through puzzles: another example* McGinnis, Michael, 1991. "Richardson, Rationality, and Restrictive Models of Arms Races," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, September, 35:3, 443-473. |
| | 11 | *Topic continued, and an overview of different modes of empirical research* |
| 6 | 16 | **PAPER ASSIGNMENT 1: RESEARCH QUESTION WITH JUSTIFICATION** *Concepts and Dimensional Thinking* Shively, W. Phillips, *The Craft of Political Research*, chapter 3 Review, Michael Craw paper Goertz, Gary, and Amy G. Mazur. 2008. "Mapping Gender and Politics Concepts: Ten Guidelines," in Goertz and Mazur, eds., *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology*, Oxford Univ. Press, pp. 14-43. |
| | 18 | *Measurement Basics: Reliability, Validity, and Precision* Shively, W. Phillips, *The Craft of Political Research*, chapters 4-5 Vasquez, John A., and Brandon Valeriano. 2010. "Classification of Interstate Wars," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 72, No. 2, April 2010, Pp. 292–309 Skocpol, Theda, Marshall Ganz, & Ziad Munson. 2000. "A Nation of Organizers: The Institutional Origins of Civic Voluntarism in the United States." *American Political Science Review* 94 (3), 527-546. |
| 7 | 23 | *Measurement: Beyond Simple Surveys* Zaller, John and Stanley Feldman. 1992. "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions versus Revealing Preferences." *American Journal of Political Science* 36(3) (Aug.): 579-616. Sniderman, Paul and Edward Carmines, *Reaching Beyond Race*, pp. 40-53 |
| | 25 | *Measuring Democracy and War* Mello, Patrick A. 2014. "Democratic Peace Theory," *SAGE Encyclopedia of War: Social Science Perspectives (*forthcoming) Ungerer, Jameson Lee. 2012. "Assessing the Progress of the Democratic Peace Research Program" *International Studies Review* (2012) 14, 1–31 |
| 8 | March 1 | **PAPER ASSIGNMENT 2: KEY CONCEPTS AND MEASUREMENT ISSUES** *Causality and Research Design* Shively, W. Phillips, *The Craft of Political Research*, chapter 6 |
| | 3 | *Case Selection Issues* Shively, W. Phillips, *The Craft of Political Research*, chapter 7 |

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| 9 | 8 | *Comparative Case Studies:*<br>Skocpol, Theda. 1976. "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18(2): 175-210.<br>Tarrow, Sidney. 1996." Making Social Science Work Across Space and Time: A Critical Reflection on Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work,"* *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, No. 2 (Jun., 1996), pp. 389-397 |
| | 10 | *Participant Observation:*<br>Fenno,"Observation, Context, and Sequence in the Study of Politics." 1986. *American Political Science Review* 80(1): 3-15.*Multiple Methods and the Transition to Full Quantification*<br>Review Shively, chapter 7 |
| Spring Break | | |
| 10 | 22 | *Basics of Statistical Inference*<br>19-20. Shively, W. Phillips, *The Craft of Political Research*, chapters 8-10 |
| | 24 | *Topic continued* |
| 11 | 29 | *Large-n Comparative Studies*<br>Singer, Matthew M. "Was Duverger Correct? Single-Member District Election Outcomes in Fifty-three Countries" *British Journal of Political Science* / Volume 43 / Issue 01 / January 2013, pp 201 - 220<br>Bailey, James and Douglas Webber. 2013. "The Political Roots of Health Insurance Benefit Mandates," working paper |
| | 31 | *Interrupted Time Series and Policy-Relevant Quasi-Experiments:*<br>Wood, B. Dan, and Richard Waterman. 1991. "The Dynamics of Political Control of the Bureaucracy." *American Political Science Review* 85(3) (Sept.): 801-28.<br>Suzanne Mettler. 2002. "Bringing the State Back in to Civic Engagement: Policy Feedback Effects of the G.I. Bill for World War II Veterans**,"** *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 96, No. 2. (Jun., 2002), pp. 351-365.*Large-n Comparative Studies II (US health policy in states)* |
| 12 | April 5 | *How Can We More Effectively Communicate our Results?*<br>Avey, Paul C., and Michael C. Desch. 2014. "What Do Policymakers Want From Us? Results of a Survey of Current and Former Senior National Security Decision Makers," *International Studies Quarterly* (2014) 58, 227–246<br>Druckman, James N. 2015. "Communicating Policy-Relevant Science," *PS* (special issue) 58-69. |
| | 7 | *Working on Research Design Projects*<br>Use class time for AI to answer questions related to research design and alternative methods of research |
| 13 | 12 | **PAPER ASSIGNMENT 3: RESEARCH DESIGN, WITH DATA SOURCES AND LIMITIATIONS**<br><br>*Random Assignment: Still the Gold Standard*<br>Cook, Thomas D. 2002. "Randomized Experiments in Educational Policy Research: A Critical Examination of the Reasons the Educational Evaluation Community has Offered for not Doing Them" *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 24 (3), 175-199. |

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| | 14 | *Policy-Relevant Theory-Oriented Research (examples from health policy)*<br>Aron-Dine, Aviva, Liran Einav, and Amy Finkelstein. 2012. "The RAND Health Insurance Experiment, Three Decades Later," *NBER Working Paper Series* 18642 http://www.nber.org/papers/w18642<br>Findelstein, Amy and Sarah Taubman. 2015. "Randomize Evaluations to Improve Health Care Delivery," *Science* 13 FEBRUARY 2015 • VOL 347 ISSUE 6223, 720-722.<br>Kilbourne, Amuy and David Atkins. 2015. "Evidence-Based Policy Making: Balancing Rigor With Real-World Health Care for Veterans and Military Personnel," *North Carolina Medical Journal* 76 (5): 339-342. |
| 14 | 19 | *A Classic Example of Positive Theory and its Implications: Arrow's Theorem*<br>Riker, William H. 1980. "Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions," *American Political Science Review* 74, No. 2 (Jun., 1980), pp. 432-446.<br>Sen, Amartya. 2012. "The Reach of Social Choice Theory," *Social Choice and Welfare* 39: 259-272 |
| | 21 | *Being Realistic: Limits of Lawlike Behavior in Political Science*<br>Wenning, Carl J. 2009. "Scientific Epistemology: How Scientists Know What They Know," *Journal of Physics Teachers Education Online* 5(2), Autumn, 3-15.<br>Brians, Craig Leonard. 2014. "Three General Laws of Politics and Government in America (with Apologies to Sir Isaac Newton)," *PS* (January) 125-130. |
| 15 | 26 | *How to bring it all together*: responses to student questions about papers |
| | 28 | *Topic continued* |
| **Finals week** | May 3 | **FINAL PAPER DUE TUESDAY MAY 3 BY NOON (Early submissions welcomed!)** |

\*Notes: Other assignments (in-class or take-home versions) will be made throughout the semester. This schedule is subject to revisions, and a few additional readings. To compensate, some readings on this list may be later downgraded to optional or supplemental readings.
Some readings include technical details that lie beyond the skill level needed for this course, and students will receive advice on how to still understand the basic points of each reading.
More detailed information will be provided for the paper and other assignments later in the semester.

*Grading of Assignments:*
80%     Components of paper assignment
        Jan. 26          Initial expression of research interests and/or policy concerns (not graded)
        Feb. 2    10%     Research question and justification: What's your puzzle & why is it important?
        Feb. 25  15%     Concepts and measurement issues
        Apr. 12  20%     Research design and case selection, with limitations
        May 3    35%     Final paper (including data sources and implications for research limits)
20%     Class participation and other assignments (in-class and take-home)

## Course Procedures and Expectations
The best way to do well in this course is to come to class regularly and complete the assigned readings before ***each*** class session. All changes to course assignments will be announced and discussed in class, and the changes posted on the Canvas course site. More information on the instructor's grading procedures, expectations for student behavior, and other related matters is available at http://pages.iu.edu/~mcginnis/course_rules_procedures.pdf.