Professor Jeffrey Karp
jeffrey.karp@brunel.ac.uk
Phone 01895 265632
Office MRJD 201
Hours: Monday 11-12; Wednesday 10-11

Explaining Politics: Quantitative Political Science in Practice

Introduction: In this module, we will focus on the use of quantitative methods because this is the most widely used methodology in political science today. By the end of the module, you should have an enhanced understanding of why political scientists rely on numbers and what implications this has for understanding real world political problems. In the second part of the module, we will focus on data analysis, introducing you to some of the basic statistical skills employed in political science. You will learn SPSS, a user-friendly statistical software program, which will give you the opportunity to analyse real political data. At the end of the course, we hope that you will be comfortable not only reading and interpreting material that relies on quantitative data but also using data in your own research.

Main Aims
- To provide students with the skills to analyse political data
- To introduce methods for gathering and understanding data
- To encourage students to critically engage with the use of existing statistical data in political discourse
- To demonstrate the importance of quantitative analysis in domestic and international politics

Reading List

The readings can be accessed online through Talis.

Core Texts (available as e-books)

Shively, W. Phillips. 2017. *The Craft of Political Research 10th Edition.* Routledge.

Marchant-Shapiro, Theresa. 2015. *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.* Sage Publications.

George, Darren and Paul Mallery. 2016. *IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference*

Computer Labs

Computer labs will replace lectures on the specified week as noted by an asterix below in the schedule. Computer labs will commence in Week 5 and continue through Week 26 (Weeks 5,11,18,21,24,26). You will have been assigned to a lab and are expected to attend that lab unless you obtain permission to switch. The times are listed below:

Group 1 Monday 12-1 ESGW 113/113A
Group 2 Monday 1-2 ESGW 113/113A
Group 3 Tuesday 2-3 ESGW 113/113A
Group 4 Tuesday 3-4 ESGW 113/113A

You will be given some problem sets that will provide you with the skills necessary to complete your final project. **Warning: *If you do not attend the lab sessions you will not be able to complete the final assignment.***

Schedule for Term 1

Week 1 (23 September) <u>Lecture 1:</u> The Evolution of Political Science

Shively, Ch. 1 "Doing Research" in *Craft of Research.*

Shively, Ch. 6: "Causal Thinking and Design of Research" in *Craft of Research.*

Bond, Jon. 2007. "The Scientification of the Study of Politics: Some Observations on the Behavioral Evolution in Political Science" in *Journal of Politics* 69(4): 897-907.

Crichton, Michael. 2008. "Aliens Cause Global Warming." Excerpt of speech in *The Wall Street Journal*, 7 November.

Robison, Joshua et al. 2018. "An Audit of Political Behavior Research" *Sage Open* 8(3): 1-14. DOI: 10.1177/2158244018794769

Week 2 (30 September) <u>Lecture 2:</u> Why Count? Making Observations with Numbers

Shively, Ch. 2 "Political Theories and Research Topics" in *Craft of Research.*

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 2: "Measurement: Counting the Biggel-Balls" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

Gardner, Dana. 2013. "With big data, the DNC turns politics into political science" BriefingsDirect. October 17.

Fowler, James. 2008. "The Colbert Bump in Campaign Donations: More Truthful than Truthy," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 41: 533-539.

Brady, Henry et al. 2001. "Law and Data: The Butterfly Ballot Episode." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 34: 59-69.

Bond, Robert M. et al. 2012. "A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization" *Nature* 489: 295-298.

Week 3 (7 October) <u>Lecture 3:</u> Reliability

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 1: "The Political Use of Numbers: Lies and Statistics" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers"*

Shively, Ch. 4: "Problems of Measurement: Accuracy" in *Craft of Research.*

Maltzman, Forrest and Paul J. Wahlbeck. 1996. "Inside the U.S. Supreme Court: The Reliability of the Justices' Conference Records" *Journal of Politics*. 58: 528-539.

Constance, Holden. 2009 "America's Uncounted Millions" in *Science* Vol. 324 (5930: 1008-1009).

Week 4 (14 October) <u>Lecture 4:</u> Validity

Gladwell, Malcolm. 2001. "Examined Life: What Stanley Kaplan Taught us about the SAT," The *New Yorker*, December 17.

Steiner, Nils D. 2014. "Comparing Freedom House Democracy Scores to Alternative Indices and Testing for Political Bias: Are US Allies Rated as More Democratic by Freedom House?" in *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*

Holmes, Steven A. 1994. "THE NATION; You're Smart If You Know What Race You Are" *New York Times*. October 23.

Karp, Jeffrey A. and David Brockington. 2005. "Social Desirability and Response Validity: A Comparative Analysis of Over-Reporting Voter Turnout in Five Countries" *Journal of Politics*. 67(3): 825-840.

*Week 5 (21 October): <u>Computer Lab 1:</u> Introduction to SPSS

George and Mallery Chapter 1 "An Overview of IBM SPSS Statistics" and Chapter 2-3.

Week 6 (28 October): No Class, Reading Week

Week 7 (4 November): <u>Lecture 5:</u> Levels of Measurement

Shively, Ch. 5: "Problems of Measurement: Precision" in *Craft of Research.*

Rea and Parker. 2014. "Developing Survey Questions" in *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide*

Elkins, Z. 2000. "Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations." *American Journal of Political Science*. 44:293-300.

Week 8 (11 November): <u>Lecture 6:</u> Survey Research

Shively, Ch. 7 "Selection of Observations for Study" in *Craft of Research.*

Karp, Jeffrey and Jack Vowles. 2018. "Cross-National Surveys and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems: When Country/Elections Become Cases" in *The Oxford Handbook of Polling and Polling Methods*. 388-409.

Norris, et al. 2014. "Measuring Electoral Integrity Around the World: A New Dataset" *PS: Political Science and Politics.* 47(4): 789-798.

Cima, Rosie. 2016. "Mechanical Turk: The New Face of Behavioral Science?"

Week 9 (18 November): <u>Lecture 7:</u> Content Analysis

Michel, Jean-Baptiste and Erez Lieberman Aiden. 2011. "What We Learned From 5 Million Books" TED Talk.

Hayes, Danny, and Matt Guardino. 2010. "Whose Views Made the News? Media Coverage and the March to War in Iraq," *Political Communication* 27(1): 59-87.

Tumasjan, Andranik, Timm O. Sprenger, Philipp G. Sandner, Isabell M. Welpe. 2010. "Predicting elections with Twitter: What 140 characters reveal about political sentiment." Paper presented at the Fourth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media. George Washington University.

Week 10 (25 November): <u>Lecture 8:</u> Datasets

Nagler, Jonathan. 1995. "Coding Style and Good Computing Practices." PS: Political Science 28(September): 488-492.

*Week 11 (2 December): <u>Computer Lab 2:</u> Using SPSS Sytnax and Recoding Variables

Nagler, Jonathan. 1995. "Coding Style and Good Computing Practices." *PS: Political Science* 28(September): 488-492.

George and Mallery Chapter 3 "Managing Data"

Week 12 (9 December): <u>Lecture 9:</u> Feed Forward: Preparing Your Essay

Schedule for Term 2

Week 16 (6 January): No Class

Week 17 (13 January): <u>Lecture 10:</u> Descriptive Statistics: Central tendency and dispersion

Marchant-Shapiro. Ch 3: "Measures of Central Tendency: That's Some Mean Baseball" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

Marchant-Shapiro, "Ch. 4: Measures of Dispersion: Missing the Mark" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers"*

Week 18 (20 January): <u>Lecture 11:</u> Graphical Illustrations and Visualizing Data

Marchant-Shapiro. Ch 8: "Describing the Pattern: What Do You See?" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

*Week 19 (27 January): <u>Computer Lab 3:</u> **Running Descriptive Statistics**

George and Mallery. Chapter 6 "Frequencies" and Chapter 7 "Descriptive Statistics"

Week 20 (3 February): No Class; Feedback on Essays (in my office on 29 January)

*Week 21 (10 February): <u>Computer Lab 4:</u> **Producing Graphs**

George and Mallery. Chapter 5 "Graphs and Charts"

Week 22 (17 February): No Class; Reading Week

Week 23 (24 February): <u>Lecture 12:</u> **Bivariate Data Analysis and Statistical Significance**

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 7 "Hypothesis Testing: Examining Relationships" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 8 "Describing the Pattern: What do You See? in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 9 "Chi-Square and Cramer's V: What do you Expect? in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 10 "Measures of Association: Making Connections" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

*Week 24 (2 March): <u>Computer Lab 5:</u> **Crosstabs**

George and Mallery Ch. 8 "Crosstabulation".

Week 25 (9 March): <u>Lecture 13:</u> **Introduction to Regression**

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 12: "Bivariate Regression: Putting All Your Ducks in a Line" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

Marchant-Shapiro, Ch. 13: "Multiple Regression: The Final Frontier" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

Marchant-Shapiro. Ch. 14: "Understanding the Numbers: Knowing What Counts" in *Statistics for Political Analysis: Understanding the Numbers.*

*Week 26 (16 March) <u>Computer Lab 6</u>: **Correlations and Regression**

Shively, Ch. 8: "Introduction to Statistics: Measuring Relationships for Interval Data" in *Craft of Research.*

Shively, Ch. 9 "Introduction to Statistics: Further Topics on Measurement of Relationships" in *Craft of Research.*

George and Mallery Ch. 10 "Bivariate Correlation" and Ch. 15 "Simple Linear Regression".

Week 27 (23 March) <u>Lecture 14:</u> Feed Forward: Preparing Your Essay

Week 28-30 (30 March-17 April): Vacation

Attendance and Engagement

All students are expected to attend classes regularly as those who fail to attend classes often get lower marks than those who do attend, and actively participate. ***This course, given the nature of the material and the skills required to complete the assessment, requires your regular attendance***. It is in class where students learn subject matter and skills that they will be assessed on and when writing references members of staff often comment on a student's performance in classes. If you miss classes due to unforeseen circumstances it is good practice to contact your Personal Tutor.

Please not that lectures will **<u>NOT</u>** be recorded.

Assessments

Assessment *(presentation, Essay 1, Essay 2, exam, etc.)*	Submission Deadline	Feedback mechanism and date
Essay (30% of grade). 1500 words.	8 January, 2020	Written and Personal feedback in my office.
Empirical Essay (70% of grade) 3000 words.	21 April, 2020	Written and Personal feedback in my office.

Assignment #1

Select <u>one</u> of the following articles listed below and write an essay (1500 words) where you address the following:

- Briefly summarise the research question and the main concepts
- What is the hypothesis?
- What are the independent and dependent variables and how are they measured?
- Select another academic article by a different author(s) that investigates one of the same concepts and discuss how that concept is measured.
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the measurement of the variables used in the different articles in terms of their reliability and validity.
- Discuss which is the better measure and explain why.

Blais, André, Jean-François Daoust, Ruth Dassonneville, Gabrielle Péloquin-Skulski. 2019. "What is the Cost of Voting?" *Electoral Studies.* 57: 145-157.

Birch, Sarah and James Dennison. 2019. "How Protest Voters Choose" *Party Politics*. 25(2):110-125.

Galandini, Silvia and Edward Fieldhouse. 2019. "Discussants that Mobilise: Ethnicity, Political Discussion Networks and Voter turnout in Britain" *Electoral Studies*. 57: 163-173.

Norris, Pippa, Holly Ann Garnett and Max Gromping. 2019. "The Paranoid Style of American Elections: Explaining Perceptions of Electoral Integrity in an Age of Populism" *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, DOI: 10.1080/17457289.2019.1593181

Singh, Shane P. and Judd R. Thornton. 2019. "Elections Activate Partisanship Across Countries" *American Political Science Review*. 113(1): 248-253.

Every essay must report the total word count on the title page and use double spacing with 12 point font and one inch margins.

The final assignment consists of a research paper (maximum 3,000 words) that involves original data analysis using SPSS (available to all students at Brunel for free) that uses one of the following datasets:

- British Election Study 2017 Face to Face Survey (BES)
- American Election Study 2016 Time Series Study (ANES)
- New Zealand Election Study 2017 (NZES)
- Another dataset (provided that you first discuss it with me)

Your paper should be organised in four sections with separate headers and include all of the following:

Introduction
1). Specify a clear research question and situate the question in the context of a brief literature review of no more than 500 words.
2). Specify a hypothesis, the null hypothesis, and identify and discuss at least one rival hypothesis.

Research Methods
3). Describe the data source that you have selected for your empirical analysis.
4). Identify the dependent and independent variables and explain how they are measured.
5). Evaluate the measures in terms of their reliability and validity.
6). Select an appropriate method for testing the hypothesis and explain why the method was chosen.

Findings
7). Report the findings from the analysis in a series of tables and figures that you create in EXCEL from data produced from the SPSS output.
8). Note at least one figure should show how the dependent variable is distributed.
9). Note that at least one table must be a crosstab.
10). Discuss the main findings and the statistic(s) used.

11). Explain whether the null hypothesis has been rejected.
12). Discuss how the rival hypothesis has been ruled out.

Conclusions
13). Reflect on the implications of your findings, compare them with the secondary literature, and propose what further research might be done.
14). Include a full list of references.

Every essay must also report the total word count on the title page and use double spacing with 12 point font and one inch margins.

The following criteria will be taken into consideration in assessing the project:
- Indications of capability in computer aided analysis of quantitative data
- Understanding of statistical and quantitative techniques;
- Ability to relate data analysis results to findings in the secondary literature;
- Ability to clearly present results in tables and figures;
- Structure, style, referencing, grammar and spelling.

Note on Plagiarism
Plagiarism is defined as "To take and use as one's own the thoughts, writings or inventions of another" (Oxford English Dictionary). It is important you understand the rules and regulations with regards to plagiarism and that you reference your coursework appropriately. More information and referencing guidance is available in the College Student Handbook: College Student Handbook/Teaching Matters/Referencing

Submitting Coursework
As per the *College Student Handbook* and *College Coursework Submission Procedure*, formal coursework submissions must be made via WiseFlow *only*. On no account will we accept any coursework via any other means. So, if you attempt to, or actually submit it to, a lecturer, the Taught Programmes Office (TPO) or to anyone else, either in person or via email, we will not accept it, and we will not look at it or mark it. This is the case for those with extenuating circumstances and for those without extenuating circumstances. Any coursework not submitted via WiseFlow will be deemed to have not been submitted.

While submitting your coursework online, you must use the e-coversheet available on Blackboard Learn in the folder called '*How to submit*' available on the main page of each module. In this folder you will also find a video and a written description of the coursework submission process.

Please note that we will not accept coursework submitted in any other file format than this/those prescribed on the coursework brief's submission instructions section. We do not accept any document ending in '.pages', and if you choose to use a Mac, you should be aware that this is not supported by the University and there are sometimes technical 'issues' caused when you choose to do so. What 'technical issues'? It might be that the document is not open-able (the most likely) or that something is deleted. After submitting your coursework to WiseFlow, please check that it is actually there. Do not rely on simply pressing the 'submit' button *hoping* that it has been submitted and it is on WiseFlow. Go back in, and check, that it is actually there. Because, if you discover, later, that it is not then this will be an error on your part for which the university cannot be held accountable.

Late submissions of coursework
The late submission policy has changed as of September 2016. How 'late coursework' is handled and who to get in contact with is detailed in the College Student Handbook in the 'Late Submission Policy' and 'Mitigating Circumstances' sections: College Student Handbook/Assessment and Award/Late submission policy

Academic support
A full list of the Departments academic staff profiles and contact details can be found online at: http://www.brunel.ac.uk/cbass/politics-history-law/people. It is useful to note that Brunel staff email addresses usually use the format of: Firstname.Surname@brunel.ac.uk. Academic staff will normally respond to student emails within 2 working days.
During term time, all academic staff have feedback and consultation hours for personal tutees and for students taking their modules. These will normally be posted on the academic member of staff's door and published on the TPO page on Blackboard Learn. Students may use these hours to follow up aspects of the modular/study or assessment block or to discuss their studies. You can go to an office hour on your own or in a small group.

Out of term time, academic staff are still available for discussions and meetings (for personal tutees and for Dissertation tutees), but often work from home or are on annual leave. Therefore, it is advisable to contact them by email to arrange an appointment.
More information on academic support can be found in the student handbook: College Student Handbook/Teaching Matters/Academic Support.