

# Drew Seib, Ph.D.

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**Course Website:** [drewseib.com/teaching/POLSOC360](http://drewseib.com/teaching/POLSOC360)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 1:30-2:30, Wednesday 8:15-9:30 and 10:30-11:30, Thursday 2:00-4:30, Friday, 8:15-9:30 and 10:30-11:30

**DEPARTMENT:** Political Science and Sociology

**COURSE PREFIX:** POL/SOC **COURSE NUMBER:** 360

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3

**I. TITLE:** Research Methods

- II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITE(S):** Course will introduce students to social science research methods. Emphasis will be placed on the scientific method, research design, the various methods of data collection commonly used in political science and sociology, and data analysis.

**Prerequisite(s):** MAT 135 or PSY 300 and POL/SOC 359, or permission of instructor

**III. COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The student will be able to

- A. load data into SPSS,
- B. compute and interpret measures of central tendency,
- C. test hypotheses using t-test and ANOVA,
- D. test hypotheses using regression analysis (OLS and logit)
- E. interpret t-test, ANOVA, and regression output from SPSS,
- F. understand the results section of a quantitative article, and
- G. write a quantitative research paper.

**IV. CONTENT OUTLINE:**

Below is a tentative outline for this course. We will try to keep to this schedule. However, adjustments may need to be made. You are responsible for coming to class to get assignments. If changes to the schedule need to be made, they will be announced in class.

**Week 1**

8/16: Hand out the Syllabus and Introduction to the Course

8/18: Unit of Analysis

Coding

Levels of Measurement: Nominal, Ordinal, Interval, and Ratio

**Week 2**

8/23: Inputting data, output

Making tables

8/25: Computing measures of central tendency

**Week 3**

8/30: Transforming data

9/1: Frequencies and mean comparisons

**Week 4**

9/6: Graphing relationships

9/8: Question and Answer Day

**Week 5**

9/13: Exam 1

9/15: Cross tabs, mean comparisons, and control variables

**Week 6**

9/20: populations, sampling, distributions, central limit theorem, and significance testing

9/22: one-sample and two-sample t-test

**Week 7**

9/27: chi-squared

9/29: chi-squared continued

**Week 8**

10/4: Question and Answer Day

10/6: Fall Break: No Class

**Week 9**

10/11: Exam 2

10/13: correlation, scatterplots, and regression

**Week 10**

10/18: Multiple OLS regression

10/20: Interacting Variables and Regression

**Week 11**

10/25: Binary logistic regression

10/27: Logit and predicted probabilities

**Week 12**

11/1: Regression continued

11/3: Other types of regressions

**Week 13**

11/8: Election Day: No Class

11/10: Question and Answer Day

**Week 14**

11/15: Exam 3

11/17: Results section and conclusion

**Week 15**

11/22: Results section and conclusion

11/24: Thanksgiving Break: No Class

## **Week 16**

11/29: Poster Sessions

12/1: Poster Sessions

### **Final Exam (research paper due)**

#### **V. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

Instructional activities may include lecture, discussion, exams, papers, video, audio, group work, in class writing assignments, and simulations.

#### **VI. FIELD, CLINICAL, AND/OR LABORATORY EXPERIENCES:**

None

#### **VII. TEXT(S) AND RESOURCES:**

Pollock III, Phillip H. 2016. An IBM SPSS Companion to Political Analysis, Fifth Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.

SPSS 23.0: If you bought the textbook from the MSU bookstore, it should have come bundled with a student version of this program.

In addition, you will be provided a number of handouts and assigned to watch a number of videos on the publisher's website, YouTube, the course website, or other websites in order to prepare you for class.

#### **VIII. EVALUATION AND GRADING PROCEDURES:**

General Policies and Procedures: Your grade in this course will consist of 3 exams, a complete quantitative research paper, problem sets, and a poster session. All assignments will be handed back as soon as possible. You should keep all assignments until the end of the semester. Should you feel you were graded unfairly on any assignment, you should wait three days from the day it was handed back. Once three days has elapsed, you should submit a letter to the professor explaining why you think you were graded unfairly, along with the original, graded assignment. The professor will consider your letter and *may* regrade your assignment. Please keep in mind that when regrading an assignment, your grade may go up or down. If you are not in class the day an assignment is handed out, you should visit the professor's office to get a copy of the assignment. If you are not in class the day an assignment is returned, you should visit the professor during office hours to retrieve your assignment.

Problem Sets: Each day during class, you will be working on a problem set, which asks you to apply what you have learned. Many of the problems sets will come out of your book, but some will be handed out by the professor. Your lowest score will be dropped. If available, you must use the student version of the data. Please make sure you read the book carefully, so you know which dataset you need to use.

Exams: There will be three exams in this course. The exams are not purposely cumulative. However, you will need information learned earlier in the semester to competently complete an exam. For example, we will be discussing levels of measurement, which you will need to understand in order to apply it to material later in the semester.

Poster Session: The last week of the semester is reserved for a poster session. Students will present an abbreviated version of their research paper on a "poster" and receive feedback prior to submitting the final draft of their paper.

Research Paper: SOC 360 and POL 360 culminate your undergraduate research methods sequence. As such, by the end of the course, you will produce an entire quantitative research paper, including a cover page, abstract, introduction, literature review, theory, hypotheses, methods, analysis and results, conclusion, and a reference page, using your discipline's style (APSA for political science and ASA for sociology) and formatting guidelines.

#### **Required Paper Meeting Deadlines:**

9/2: You must meet with me, one-on-one, by this date to for an initial discussion of your paper. A worksheet will be handed out in class and must be completed and brought with you to the meeting.

10/1: You must meet with me, one-on-one, to discuss the data you plan to use for your paper. There will be a worksheet that you will need to fill out and bring with you. In addition, if you already have data, you should bring it with you to ensure that it is appropriate for your paper.

<u>Grades</u>	
Exams	17 % each
Research Paper	19 %
Problem Sets	25 %
Poster Session	5 %
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Total	100%

Grading Scale

- A = 90% -100%
- B = 80% - 89%
- C = 70% - 79%
- D = 60% - 69%
- E = Below 60%

Note: Grades will not be rounded.

**IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

*Students are expected to adhere to the MSU Attendance Policy outlined in the current MSU Bulletins.*

Attendance will be taken regularly at the professor's discretion. *If you miss a class, you should contact a fellow classmate to get notes and find out what you missed.*

**X. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**

Murray State University takes seriously its moral and educational obligation to maintain high standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior. Instructors are expected to evaluate students' academic achievements accurately, as well as ascertain that work submitted by students is authentic and the result of their own efforts, and consistent with established academic standards. Students are obligated to respect and abide by the basic standards of personal and professional integrity.

**Violations of Academic Honesty include:**

**Cheating** - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized information such as books, notes, study aids, or other electronic, online, or digital devices in any academic exercise; as well as unauthorized communication of information by any means to or from others during any academic exercise.

**Fabrication and Falsification** - Intentional alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves changing information whereas fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information.

**Multiple Submission** - The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work, including oral reports, for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor.

**Plagiarism** - Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, creative work, or data of someone else as one's own in any academic exercise, without due and proper acknowledgement.

Instructors should outline their expectations that may go beyond the scope of this policy at the beginning of each course and identify such expectations and restrictions in the course syllabus. When an instructor receives evidence, either directly or indirectly, of academic dishonesty, he or she should investigate the instance. The faculty member should then take appropriate disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to the following:

- 1) Requiring the student(s) to repeat the exercise or do additional related exercise(s).
- 2) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) on the particular exercise(s) involved.
- 3) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) in the course.

**If the disciplinary action results in the awarding of a grade of E in the course, the student(s) may not drop the course.**

Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any exercise or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the exercise has been compromised. Faculty also reserve the right to document in the course syllabi further academic honesty policy elements related to the individual disciplines.

A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member with the department chair in writing within five working days. Note: If, at any point in this process, the student alleges that actions have taken place that may be in violation of the Murray State University Non-Discrimination Statement, this process must be suspended and the matter be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity. Any appeal will be forwarded to the appropriate university committee as determined by the Provost.

## **XI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT:**

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. In particular and without limiting the preceding and pursuant to and consistent with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its regulations 34 CFR 100 et seq.; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its regulations 34 CFR 104; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC 1681 et seq., and its regulations 34 CFR 106 et seq; and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and its regulations 34 CFR 110, Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its educational programs and activities. This non-discrimination in education programs and activities extends to employment and admissions and to recruitment, financial aid, academic programs, student services, athletics, and housing. Murray State is required by Title IX and 34 CFR part 106 not to discriminate on the basis of sex and the prohibition against sex discrimination specifically includes a prohibition of sexual harassment and sexual violence. For more information contact the Executive Director of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Access/ Murray State University Title IX Coordinator, Murray State University, 103 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071 Telephone: [\(270\) 809-3155](tel:(270)809-3155) Fax: [\(270\) 809-6887](tel:(270)809-6887); TDD: [\(270\) 809-3361](tel:(270)809-3361); Email: [msu.titleix@murraystate.edu](mailto:msu.titleix@murraystate.edu)

## **XII. Emailing the Professor:**

It has been brought to my attention that some of you may have never been taught how to send a proper email. When you email your professor, you should take into consideration whether email is the appropriate venue and make sure that your question is not already addressed in the syllabus. Many times you will find that I can be of more service in person during office hours or through an appointment than through email and will save us both time. If you do decide that email is the appropriate method of communication, there are several requirements for your email.

1. Your email must contain an appropriate subject that identifies which class you are in and what your email is about (i.e. POL140-06: Paper 2 Data Collection Question)
2. You must address your professor professionally (i.e. Dear Dr. Seib,).
3. You must email the professor from your school account.
4. Your email should clearly and quickly get to the point of why you are emailing the professor.
5. Sign your email (i.e. Sincerely, John Doe)
6. Below your name in the signature line, indicate which course you are in and the section number (i.e. POL140-06). If you do not know the section number, include the days and time your class meets.
7. Once you have written your email, you should proof read it.
8. I strongly encourage you to examine this website, which offers information about emailing your professor: <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>

Too often, I get emails in which I do not know who is emailing me or I cannot understand the email. I am trying to head off these mistakes by providing you with some guidance. I strongly encourage you to follow the instructions above. Failure to do so may mean that it will take longer for you to get an answer to your email. Messages sent to the professor on Canvas should also adhere to these rules as closely as possible. In addition, you should be aware that I am not on Canvas everyday and may not see messages sent to me on Canvas for several days.

## **XIII. Cellphones in the Classroom:**

The use of cellphones in the classroom is prohibited. This includes texting. Using your cellphone during class is disrespectful and distracting to both the professor and your fellow classmates. Moreover, when you are using your cellphone you are not paying attention or staying engaged in the course. Studies have shown that students are unaware how frequently they actually use their phone in the classroom. What is more, studies show students who use their cellphone in the classroom on average do about half a letter grade worse than if they had not used their phone. If a student uses their cellphone during class, the professor will add a question to the exam.

## **XIV. Computer Usage**

While you may have access to computers in this classroom and will be required to use them frequently, computers are **only** to be used for this course. If the professor sees you working on assignments for other classes or personal stuff, you will be penalized 3% of your final grade for each instance.

## **XV. Flipping the Classroom:**

This course is going to be taught a little differently than many courses you have taken. In this course, we are going to be flipping the classroom. Instead of coming to the class to listen to a lecture and doing homework at home, you will watch video lectures at home and do homework in class. On many days I will take a few minutes to review some main points on the day's topic and you can of course always ask questions. However, you will not have unlimited time in class to do homework, so any work not finished in class will need to be completed at home and submitted by the due date. Please be advised that you must watch the lectures on your own time, not during class.

**XVI. Late Work and Missed Exams:**

Late assignments will not be accepted, except as university policy applies. If you do not have your assignment when the professor collects the assignment, it is late and will not be accepted. If you are late arriving to class and the assignment has already been collected, the assignment is late and will not be accepted. If you are absent from class on the day an assignment is due, it must be submitted to the professor by the start of the next class you are in attendance or it is considered late and will not be accepted. The professor reserves the right to ask for documentation of your absence.

Make up exams will be granted at the professor's discretion as university policy applies. Should you need to miss an exam for a scheduled university activity, you must notify the professor one week in advance. Should you need to miss an exam due to illness or an emergency, you should contact the professor as soon as possible and no more than 48 hours after the scheduled exam. Please note that anyone granted a make-up exam may be given an exam different from the regularly scheduled exam. The professor reserves the right to ask for documentation of your absence.

Please note that much of the material in this course is cumulative—meaning that things you learn early in the course will continue to be used throughout the semester. If you do not submit an assignment, you will still want to complete the assignment as the information learned will likely be used later and it will of course appear on the exam. Also, as you will quickly learn, you will be creating some new variables in your problems sets that you will need for future use. So, if you skip an assignment, you may have to go back later and do it in order to create the variable you need for an assignment you are currently working on.

**XVII. Submitting Assignments:**

When submitting an assignment, there are a few things that you should keep in mind. First, assignments containing multiple pages of paper must be stapled. Failure to do so will result in a 5% reduction to your grade on that assignment. Second, if there is something that you do not understand about an assignment or is not clear to you, it is your responsibility to ask questions prior to submitting the assignment. Third, all assignments must be submitted as a hard copy to the professor by the due date at the beginning of class (unless stated otherwise). Electronic submissions will not be accepted. Fourth, if the professor cannot read your writing, you will not receive credit.

**XVIII. Classmate Contact Info:**

In the event that you miss a class you should contact a fellow classmate to get notes and find out what you missed from class, this includes finding out what homework was assigned or if there were any handouts. Please write the name, email address, and phone number of two classmates in the space below.

Classmate 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Classmate 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_