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Spring 2017

Investigating International Relations

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**School of Diplomacy and International Relations
Seton Hall University**

Investigating International Relations

DIPL 3800 AA & AB

**Monday and Wednesday 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Mondays and Wednesdays 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.
Spring 2017**

Professor: Atal Ahmadzai
Office Hours:
Room:
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Description: Investigating International Relations is a Social Sciences research methodology course that is aimed towards offering understanding regarding scientifically investigating issues and themes within the realm of International Relations.

As DIPL 3800 is designated as "numeracy infused" and is a prerequisite to the Senior Research Project (DIPL 4101), the course is designed to achieve the following four goals:

First, to increase the competency and build student's skills in qualitative thinking. Hence, there will be assignments that require students to do math and engage with numbers. Therefore, some of us may need to challenge the commonly acquired false assumption of, "I am not a math person." The class is not intended to create John Nash, but to enable students to enhance their qualitative thinking and apply basic math and statistics for their research projects. Second, the course will prepare students for their Senior Research Project and by the end of this semester, you will have a basic research template for your final project. Third, looking for causal relationships and making inferences between variables is one of the most demanding mandates of empirical scrutiny and scientific investigation within the field of International Relations (IR) and Political Science. The regression model is one of the analytical tools that is used mostly for inferential analysis. Therefore, in order to prepare students for their final research projects, this course will cover some basic understanding about regression analysis in the final weeks, with a particular emphasis on Ordinary Least Squares regression. Fourth, analytical software is used extensively in different branches of Social Sciences for both descriptive and inferential analysis. SPSS is one of the most standard statistical packages that is most commonly used. This course will include the materials needed to introduce students to the skills needed for using SPSS for descriptive and inferential analysis.

In brief, DIPL 3800 offers understanding about the Social Science research process, descriptive and inferential analysis, and an introduction into the basic functioning and value of using SPSS. It is fair for the student to know that this is an extensive course with regard to the amount of readings, calculations/math, and statistical applications.

Course Structure: Social Sciences Research is a systematic or step-by-step process. To understand this efficiently, DIPL 3800 applies a systematic approach of learning. The course is structured into two main sections. The first section is allocated to understanding the research process. Within a total of seven weeks, the first section covers the different steps involved in the research process. The second

section, beginning in the eighth week, discusses the study of descriptive and inferential analysis. Intermittently, practical sessions will be implemented throughout the course in order for students to acquire the necessary skills for utilizing SPSS.

Reading Materials: The following textbook is the main reference for the course:

Janet B. Johnson and H.T. Reynolds. 2012 Political Science Research Methods 8th Edition. SAGE/CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-60781-689-0.

The Diplomacy Office is informed to arrange checkouts and reserve copies of the textbook for students. In addition to the above, there are additional reading materials for specific sessions and they will be uploaded on Blackboard. Every student is required to install SPSS on her/his computer. The Diplomacy Office provided the names of students registered for this class to the technology office, which will facilitate installing the software on the computers. Please get in touch with me or with Ms. Susan Malcolm at the Diplomacy Office for the due process regarding the installation of the statistical software.

Assignments: Student's performance throughout the course will be evaluated based on a series of criteria, with the **first** being attendance. Students are required to attend all sessions. Missing of a session will cost student's grades allocated for class attendance. **Second** is the homework/assignments. During the course of the semester, students will have a total of four individual assignments. These will be posted on Blackboard and must be returned within the assigned due dates. The **third** is the mid-term exam. Students will be given a mid-term take home exam on the 13th of March. The exam will include a number of questions that will require short answers, math calculations, and SPSS applications. The questions will be related to the research process and descriptive statistics. The **fourth** is the final research project. During the course of the semester and concurrently to the weekly topics, every student will work on her/his research project. At the end of the semester, every student is required to have a well-developed research study design for their final research project

Grading:

Class Participation and Attendance: 10%

Students Presentations: 25%

Mid-term Exam: 30%

Final Exam: 35%

Academic and Professional Integrity: Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See University and School standards for academic conduct here: <<http://www13.shu.edu/offices/student-life/community-standards/upload/Seton-Hall-University-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>>
<<http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>>

Disability Services: It is the policy and practice of Seton Hall University to promote inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Please note, students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at (973) 313-6003 or by e-mail at DSS@shu.edu.

Policy on Incompletes: Incompletes will be given only in exceptional cases for emergencies. Students wishing to request a grade of Incomplete must provide documentation to support the request accompanied by a Course Adjustment Form (available from the Diplomacy Main Office) to the professor *before* the date of the final examination. If the incomplete request is approved, the professor reserves the right to specify the new submission date for all missing coursework. Students who fail to submit the missing course work within this time period will receive a failing grade for all missing coursework and a final grade based on all coursework assigned. Any Incomplete not resolved within one calendar year of receiving the Incomplete or by the time of graduation (whichever comes first) automatically becomes an "FI" (which is equivalent to an F). It is the responsibility of the student to make sure they have completed all course requirements within the timeframe allotted. Please be aware that Incompletes on your transcript will impact financial aid and academic standing.

Course Outline:

Part 1: Introduction to Social Sciences Research

1st Week: Introduction to Social Sciences Research

Monday (9th January): Class Orientation

Wednesday (11th January): Introduction to Social Sciences Research

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 1 (Introduction)

Bagalione: Chapter 1 (So you have to write a research paper)

2nd Week: Research Process

Monday (16th January): No Class

Wednesday (18th January): Formulating Research Question

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 3 (Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables)

Bagalione: Chapter 2 (Getting Started: Finding a Research Question)

Assignment#1: Due on 20th January

3rd Week: Research Process

Monday (23rd January): Research Design

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 5 (Research Design)

Wednesday (25th January): Research Design (Continued)

Bagalione: Chapter 7 (Making Your Plan and Protecting Yourself from Criticism: The Research Design)

4th Week: Reviewing Literature

Monday (30th January): Conducting A Literature Review

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 6 (Conducting a Literature review)

Wednesday (1st of February): Documentation and Citation

Bagalione: Chapter 3 (Learning proper citation forms, finding the scholarly debate, and summarizing and classifying the arguments: The Annotated Bibliography)

5th Week: Measurements

Monday (6th February): Types of Measurements

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 4 (The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research: Measurement)

Wednesday (8th February): Introduction to SPSS

Students must bring their laptops installed with SPSS

Assignment#2: Due on 8th of February

6th Week: Methods and Techniques

Monday (13th February): Sampling Methods

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 7: Sampling

Wednesday (15th February): Data Collection Techniques

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 8: Making Empirical Observations: Direct and Indirect Observations

7th Week: Methods and Techniques

Monday (20th February) Data Collection Techniques

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 10 (Survey Research and Interviewing)

Wednesday (22nd February): Working with SPSS

Students must bring their laptops installed with SPSS

Part Two: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

8th Week: Descriptive Statistics

Monday (27th February): Measures of Central Tendency

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 11 (Statistics: First Steps, P: 351-372, Sixth Edition)

Wednesday (1st March): Measures of Dispersion

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 11 (Statistics: First Steps, P: 373-393, Sixth Edition)

Assignment#3: Due on 3rd of March

9th Week (6th and 8th March): Spring Break (No Classes)

10th Week: Inferential Analysis

Monday (13th March): Inferential Statistics

Wednesday (15th March): Testing Hypothesis, t-Test and z-test

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 11 (P: 395-425, Sixth Edition)

11th Week: Practicing SPSS

Monday (20th March): Descriptive Analysis in SPSS

Dataset and guidelines will be provided on Blackboard

Wednesday (22nd March): Application of inferential analysis in SPSS

Dataset and guidelines will be provided on Blackboard

Mid-term exam will be posted on Blackboard

12th Week: Measuring Statistical Relationships

Monday (27th March): Cross-Tabulation

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 11 (P:426-454, Sixth Edition)

Wednesday (29th March): CHI-Square Test and ANOVA

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 11 (P:454-, Sixth Edition)

Additional Reading for the week:

Agresti and Finlay. Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences (4th Edition): Chapter 8: Analyzing Association Between Categorical Variables)

13th Week: Regression Model

Monday (3rd April): Introduction to Regression Model

Agresti and Finlay. Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences (4th Edition): Chapter 9: P.255-269)

Wednesday (5th April): Introduction to Regression (Continued)

Materials and data for class practice will be provided on Blackboard

14th Week: Regression Model

Monday (10th April): Measuring Correlation

Johnson and Reynolds: Chapter 11 (P:483-502, Sixth Edition)

Agresti and Finlay. Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences (4th Edition): Chapter 9: P.269-289)

Wednesday (12th April): Measuring Correlation (Continued)

Materials and data for class practice will be provided on Blackboard

Assignment#4: Due on 15th of April**15th Week: Guidelines for Writing Research Paper**

Monday (17th April): No Class (Easter Monday)

Wednesday (19th April): Guidelines for Writing Research Paper

Bagalione: Chapter 9 (Bringing the Paper Together in Three Essential Ways: The Conclusion, Introduction, and Title)

16th Week: Consultation Week

Monday (24th April): Individual meetings with professor

You need to provide me with your draft paper at least one week before your scheduled meeting.

Students are required to assign for a specific time slot for the individual meetings. The assigning sheet will be provided on Blackboard in advance.

Wednesday (26th April): Individual meetings with professor

You need to provide me with your draft paper at least one week before your scheduled meeting.

Students are required to assign for a specific time slot for the individual meetings. The assigning sheet will be provided on Blackboard in advance.

17th Week: Paper Submission (No Class)

Monday (1st May): Turn in your final research paper on Blackboard no later than 11:59PM EST

Descriptions of Assignments/Homework

Assignment#1: Research question, variables, and research design

In no more than two pages, describe your research question; its theoretical and policy importance and implications, and identify your variables. This is the start of your research proposal. Therefore, you need to conduct your research regarding the research topic, question, and its importance.

Assignment#2: Annotated Bibliography

Conduct a literature review for your proposed topic. Identify the existing literature on the topic in an annotated bibliography arranged in a listed format with the name of the author/s and a brief summary of the paper or research.

Assignment#3: Descriptive statistic paper

A number of questions will be posted on Blackboard and students are required to do the calculations and to provide the process of the calculations and the answers. Some questions may require SPSS application.

Assignment#4: Inferential Statistics Paper

A number of questions and a dataset will be posted on Blackboard and students are required to do inferential analysis and provide the process of the calculations and the answers. Some questions may require SPSS application.

Final Paper

The final is an individual paper, as all other assignments. The final paper is supposed to be at least 15 pages (double spaced A4 size papers) of a well-developed research proposal. The paper should have all the necessary components of the research process including, the research question(s), hypothesis, a comprehensive literature review, study design including sampling strategy, data collection methods, and statistical analysis tools. The paper should have a bibliography and future plans for conducting the research.