

Political Science 498
Political Survey Design & Analysis
Spring 2022

Instructor: M. Rosemary Pang

Office Hours: 1:00PM - 2:00PM Tu&We

Class Hours: 10:35AM - 11:50AM Tu&Th

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Office Location: Pond 224

Class Room: Chambers Bldg 210

Course Description:

Surveys and polls provide much of the data we use to understand the world around us. They provide information to understand public opinion and behavior. This course provides an introduction to survey design and analysis. The content of the course covers topics such as survey question design, data collection methods, sampling design, measurement error, missing values, survey experiments, and survey data analysis. Students will explore actual survey data, such as the General Social Survey, and also develop their own set of survey questions and analyze the data they collect.

Learning Objectives:

Students will learn the key components of survey data collection and analysis (1) how to determine the most appropriate mode of data collection; (2) how to design and write questions to measure key concepts of interest; (3) how to evaluate survey questions; (4) how to prepare, analyze and interpret survey data; (5) how to communicate the results of a survey to researchers and the public.

Course Materials:

Floyd J. Fowler (2008) *Survey Research Methods 5th Edition* (USA: CQ Press)

Other book chapters and articles are on CANVAS. A few readings have direct urls embedded in the syllabus.

Course Requirement:

Students are expected to: (a) attend all lectures; (b) read assigned materials before the start of each class; (c) complete three assignments; (d) complete final paper and presentation.

Course Structure and Grading:

Final grades will be based on class participation and in-class practices (20% of final grade), three assignments (10% of final grade each), final paper (25% of final grade), and presentation (25% of final grade).

- **Lecture and Discussion:** Classes will be devoted to lecture and discussion. Lecture notes and readings will be posted on CANVAS before each class.
- **In-class practices:** In-class practices about programming and interpreting will be posted on CANVAS before some classes. Students are expected to submit in-class practices before 11:59 PM on the day of the class.
- **Assignments:** Details of the assignments will be posted on CANVAS.
- **Final project:** For the final project, students will design and analyze your own survey research, write a 8-page research paper, and present your findings.

- **Grade Scale:** A: 95-100; A-: 90-94.9; B+: 87.9-89.9; B: 83.33-87.8; B-: 80-83.32; C+: 75-79.9; C: 70-74.9; D: 60 to 69.9; FAIL: 0-59.9

Exam & Assignment Dates:

Assignment 1: available online Jan 20; due Feb 10 (10:35 AM)

Assignment 2: available online Feb 24; due Mar 3 (10:35 AM)

Assignment 3: available online Mar 1; due Mar 15 (10:35 AM)

Final project: available online Mar 3; due Apr 28 (10:35 AM)

Late Assignment/Exams:

Each assignment is due at 10:35 AM (on Canvas) on the assigned date. Late assignments accrue a penalty of one letter grade (e.g. B+ becomes C+) each 24-hour period until the assignment is given to the instructor. After 96 hours, no late assignment is accepted.

University Policies:

- **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT:**

Penn State defines academic integrity as “the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner” (Senate Policy 49-20). Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without permission from the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students facing allegations of academic misconduct should not drop the course; those who do will be added to the course again and will be expected to complete course work and meet course deadlines. If the allegations are dismissed, then the drop will be permitted. Students found responsible for academic misconduct often receive academic sanctions, which can be severe, and put themselves at risk for disciplinary sanctions assigned by the University’s Office of Student Conduct (see Senate Policy G-9).

Students with questions about academic integrity should visit <http://www.la.psu.edu/> and then click on “Academic Integrity.”

- **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT:**

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University’s educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. Student Disability Resources (SDR) website provides contact information for every Penn State campus (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/disability-coordinator>). For further information, please visit the Student Disability Resources website (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/>).

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation.

See documentation guidelines at: <http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

- **COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES STATEMENT:**

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Counseling and Psychological Services at University Park (CAPS)

(<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/>): 814-863-0395

Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400

Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

- **EDUCATIONAL EQUITY/REPORT BIAS STATEMENT:**

Penn State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Consistent with University Policy AD29, students who believe they have experienced or observed a hate crime, an act of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment that occurs at Penn State are urged to report these incidents as outlined on the University's Report Bias webpage (<http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/>)

- **STATEMENT FOR LONG-TERM ABSENCES:**

During your enrollment at Penn State, unforeseen challenges may arise. If you ever need to miss an extended amount of class in such a circumstance, please notify your professor so you can determine the best course of action to make up missed work. If your situation rises to a level of difficulty you cannot manage on your own with faculty support, reach out to the Student Care & Advocacy office by phone at (814-863-2020) or email them at StudentCare@psu.edu

Class Schedule and Readings

The schedule is tentative and subject to change. We may adjust the schedule due to time or interest.

Jan 11 Introduction

No readings; first day of class.

Jan 13 Intro to PLSC research: Research topics, research questions, and literature review

Johnson, Reynolds, & Mycoff. Chapter 3. CANVAS

Jan 18 Intro to PLSC research: Hypotheses, Concepts, Variables and Measurement

Johnson, Reynolds, & Mycoff. Chapter 4. CANVAS

Jan 20 The basics of survey research

Fowler. Chapter 2

Assignment 1: Final project research topic Due before class on Thursday, 2/10

Jan 25 Sampling

Fowler. Chapter 3

Jan 27 Nonresponse

Fowler. Chapter 4

Feb 1 Class Canceled

Feb 3 Question wording and social desirability

Fowler. Chapter 6

Bernstein, Chadha, & Montjoy. "Overreporting Voting: Why it Happens and Why it Matters" (22-44) CANVAS

Feb 8 Response options: rating, ranking, open-ended

Krosnick & Alwin. "An Evaluation of a Cognitive Theory of Response-Order Effects in Survey Measurement" (201-219) CANVAS

Geer. "Do Open-Ended Questions Measure 'Salient' Issues" (360-370) CANVAS

Krosnick et. al. "The Impact of 'No Opinion' Response Options on Data Quality: Non-Attitude Reduction or an Invitation to Satisfice?" (371-403) CANVAS

Feb 10 Interviewer effect

Fowler. Chapter 8

Feb 15 Different types of survey: Mail and telephone

Fowler. Chapter 5

Feb 17 Different types of survey: Internet

The Challenges of Conducting Surveys of Youth

Kempf & Remington. "New Challenges for Telephone Survey Research in the 21st Century"

(113-26) CANVAS

The Growing Gap between Landline and Dual Frame Election Polls

Feb 22 Practical issues: Recruitment, Ethics, IRB

Fowler. Chapter 11

Feb 24 Practical issues: Use of Qualtrics

No reading

Assignment 2: Pilot survey feedback Due before class on Thursday, 3/3

Mar 1 Evaluating survey questions and instruments

Fowler. Chapter 7

Assignment 3: Evaluating survey Due before class on Tuesday, 3/15

Mar 3 Survey experiment

Gilens. "An Anatomy of Survey-Based Experiments" (232-250) CANVAS

Barbaras & Jerit. "Are Survey Experiments Externally Valid" (226-242) CANVAS

Final project: Final research paper and presentation Due before class on Thursday, 4/28

Mar 8 & Mar 10 Spring Break

Mar 15 Individual meeting for final project

Mar 17 Individual meeting for final project 2

Mar 22 Individual meeting for final project 3

Mar 24 Preparing survey data

Fowler. Chapter 9

Mar 29 Preparing survey data 2

No reading

Mar 31 Analyzing survey data: single variable

Dietz & Kalof. Chapter 4. CANVAS

Apr 5 Analyzing survey data: single variable 2

No reading

Apr 7 Analyzing survey data: two groups

Agresti & Finlay. Chapter 7. CANVAS

Apr 12 Analyzing survey data: two groups 2

No reading

Apr 14 Analyzing survey data: two variables

Wheelan. Chapter 4. CANVAS

Apr 19 Reporting survey results & visualization

Dietz & Kalof. Chapter 3. CANVAS

Dietz & Kalof. Chapter 5. CANVAS

Apr 21 Final project help session

Apr 26 & Apr 28 Student presentations

Resources for learning R

R for Data Science

Cookbook for R

Quick-R

R tutorials