

Research in Policy and Administration (POL SC 9330)

Fall 2020

Tuesdays, 6:00-8:30pm

104 Arts & Sciences Building

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Assistant Professor

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Office: 301 Professional Building, but there's a pandemic, so don't go there

Virtual office hours: On Zoom, Thursdays, 10am-noon, and by appointment (see Course Policies)

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Phone: 573-882-7873

Syllabus updated: October 14, 2020

Course Overview

This course is a research workshop. The primary goal of the course is to develop skills needed to conduct original research in policy and administration. It provides an overview of the research process with an emphasis on the development of research questions, research design, data collection, and the presentation of original research in conferences and in papers.

This course will *not* provide a comprehensive overview of the scholarly literature in any substantive subfield or discipline. That is the job of introductory seminars. Students in this class should already have a grounding in the foundational literature in their chosen area of study. The readings in this course are mostly focused on concepts important to the actual conduct of research, including research design, measurement, qualitative studies, survey research, and more.

A secondary goal of the course is to familiarize students with some examples of the most recent research in these fields, since introductory seminars do tend to focus on classic and foundational pieces. Students will play a part in selecting examples of recent research for the syllabus toward the end of the semester.

Course Policies

Meetings, Questions, and Stata Assistance

This semester, due to the ongoing pandemic, I will conduct my office hours virtually on Zoom. (I will provide a standing Zoom link soon.)

It is always a good idea to schedule meetings with me in advance rather than simply showing up at my office (or my virtual office hours as the case may be). I am happy to meet with you without an appointment during my designated office hours, but such meetings tend to be less productive because I haven't had any time to prepare. As such, I believe it is in both your and my best interest to schedule appointments via email and give me some idea of what you would like to discuss.

If you have a question about or need help with Stata, this is not just a suggestion, but a hard and fast policy: you *must* submit any Stata-related questions to me via email, with a clear description of your question or the problem you are having, and any materials I might need to help you resolve the issue (dataset, code or do file). If you simply show up in my office (or virtual office hours) unannounced to show me your problem in the hopes that I will fix it for you on the spot, I will ask you to leave and email me instead. Usually I will be able to help you over email, but we can schedule a follow-up meeting if necessary.

Extensions and Late Assignments

Late Research Proposal and Research Paper assignments will be penalized 10 points out of 100 per day. Late submissions of the Short Assignments will not be accepted.

If you do have some sort of family or medical emergency that will prevent you from completing and assignment on time, please contact me about it in advance of the due date if at all possible to arrange for an extension and avoid lateness penalties.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the

course instructor. Please visit <https://osrr.missouri.edu/guidelines/index.html> to familiarize yourself with your obligations related to academic integrity and conduct as a student enrolled at the University of Missouri.

All written work must be turned in on Canvas, where it will be run through the “TurnItIn” plagiarism detection software.

Students with Disabilities

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning, use of a laptop or other device), please establish an accommodation plan with the [MU Disability Center](#), S5 Memorial Union, 573-882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. I defer all decisions on these sorts of accommodations to the experts at the Disability Center - do not make these requests of me directly. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

Intellectual Pluralism

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director; the director of the [Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities](#); the [MU Equity Office](#), or equity@missouri.edu.

All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor at the end of the course.

Decreasing the Risk of COVID-19 in Classrooms and Labs

MU cares about the health and safety of its students, faculty, and staff. To provide safe, high-quality education amid COVID-19, we will follow several specific campus policies in accordance with the advice of the Center for Disease Control and Boone County health authorities. This statement will be updated as information changes.

- If you are experiencing any COVID-related symptoms, or are otherwise feeling unwell, do not attend in-person classes and contact your health care provider and/or student health immediately. COVID symptoms include: fever greater than 100.4 or chills; cough,

shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; fatigue; unexplained muscle or body aches; headache; new loss of taste or smell; sore throat; congestion or runny nose; nausea or vomiting; diarrhea.

- We will all wear face coverings while in the classroom, unless you have a documented exemption due to a disability or medical condition.
- We will maintain a 6-foot distance from each other at all times (except in specific lab/studio courses with other specific guidelines for social distancing).
- We will enter the classroom and fill the room starting at the front, filing all the way across a row. When class ends, we will exit the row nearest to the door first; the instructor or TA will give the signal for the next row to exit, in the same manner.
- In any small section or lab class that requires them, additional measures will be listed in the syllabus and be mandatory for class participation.
- Online office hours will be available for all students.
- This course may be recorded for the sole purpose of sharing the recording with students who can't attend class. The instructor will take care not to disclose personally identifiable information from the student education records during the recorded lesson.

Compliance with these guidelines is required for all; anyone who fails to comply will be subject to the [accountability process](#), as stated in the University's [Collected Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter 200 Student Code of Conduct.

If an instructor has concerns about how a student is following COVID-19 policies and protocols, please report those concerns to the Office of the Dean of Students. You can fill out a COVID Safety Measures Reporting Form here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMissouriSystem&layout_id=38

By taking the above measures, we are supporting your health and that of the whole Mizzou community. Thank you in advance for joining me and your peers in adhering to these safety measures.

Flexible Course Attendance Policy

Due to the ongoing pandemic, any student may decide to attend class remotely via video chat rather than in person. Please contact me to make the necessary arrangements. Note that you are not required to disclose any health information to me.

Required and Recommended Texts

The following texts are required for this class. They are available at the Mizzou Store as well as through online booksellers.

Christopher Howard. 2017. *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*. University of Chicago Press.
("Howard")

Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds. 2010. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards, Second Edition*. Rowman & Littlefield. ("Brady and Collier")

The following texts are recommended but not required.

Andrew Abbott. 2004. *Methods of Discovery: Heuristics for the Social Sciences*. WW Norton.

Christopher M. Weible and Paul Sabatier, eds. 2017. *Theories of the Policy Process, Fourth Edition*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

William R. Shadish, Thomas D. Cook, and Donald T. Campbell. 2001. *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference, Second Edition*. Cengage.

Assignments and Grades

Research Proposal (15%)

This 3 to 4 page proposal, accompanied by a conference-style abstract of 250 words, is intended to help you plan and prepare for the final research paper. It will be due on Canvas by Thursday, October 1.

Research Paper (40%)

Students will write a full research paper (roughly 20-35 pages) suitable for presentation at a conference or submission to a scholarly journal. This will be an iterative process, with an initial draft due Sunday, November 22 and the final draft due, with a revision memo, on Tuesday, December 15. The final paper grade will take account of the quality of the final product as well as the improvement between the drafts. More detail on this assignment will be provided in a separate document.

Research Presentation (5%)

Students will prepare and give a 15-minute presentation on their research paper in class on December 8. Each student will be assigned as a discussant for the paper of another student. Grades will reflect the quality of the presentation itself, the presenter's responses to questions and comments, and the presenter's own performance as discussant for a classmate.

Short Assignments (25%)

These assignments are described in the schedule below. These relatively brief exercises are intended to help you prepare for class discussion and apply some of the concepts from the course. Some assignments require posting to a discussion board rather than submitting a document.

All short assignments will be *due on Canvas by 9am on the day of the class* under which they are listed. They will be graded on a 10-point scale using the following scheme: 10 points for "excellent," 9 for "good," 8 for "satisfactory," and 7 or less for work that is unsatisfactory or incomplete. Half-point grades are possible. Each of these assignments will count equally toward the grade.

Participation (15%)

Participation will be an especially important part of this class. We will not only be discussing literature, but engaging in various activities and, most important of all, discussing your work and research ideas and those of your classmates.

Grading Scale

Final letter grades will be decided based on the following cut points:

<u>Final percentage</u>	<u>Letter grade</u>
94.0 - 100.0	A
90.0 - <94.0	A-
87.0 - <90.0	B+
84.0 - <87.0	B
80.0 - <84.0	B-
77.0 - <80.0	C+
74.0 - <77.0	C
70.0 - <74.0	C-
67.0 - <70.0	D+
64.0 - <67.0	D
61.0 - <64.0	D-
Below 61	F

Week One: August 25 - Introduction

Week Two: September 1 - Research Questions, Theory, and Framing I

Kieran Healy. 2017. "Fuck Nuance." *Sociological Theory* 35(2): 118-127. (Available here: <https://kieranhealy.org/files/papers/fuck-nuance.pdf>)

Howard, Chapter 1

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. 2008. *The Craft of Research*, 3rd Edition. University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1-4 (Canvas)

Short assignment due before class: Complete the "Practice: Inspecting" exercise (all five questions) at the end of Howard, Chapter 1 using one and only one article from Howard's list, or another article of your choosing.

Week Three: September 8 - Research Questions, Theory, and Framing II

Howard, Chapters 2 and 3

Kevin B. Smith. 2002. "Typologies, Taxonomies, and the Benefits of Policy Classification." *Policy Studies Journal* 30(3): 379-395.

Short assignment due before class: Create three research questions on the same topic using three different theoretical lenses in policy and/or administration. Briefly explain each question (a paragraph or two each is sufficient).

Week Four: September 15 - Case Selection, Causal Inference, and Research Design

Howard, Chapters 4 and 5

Brady and Collier, Chapter 2 (David Collier, Jason Seawright, and Gerardo L. Munck, "The Quest for Standards: King, Keohane, and Verba's *Designing Social Inquiry*")

Brady and Collier, Chapter 14 (Thad Dunning, "Design-Based Inference")

Bear F. Braumoeller, Giampiero Marra, Rosalba Radice, and Aisha E. Bradshaw. 2018. "Flexible Causal Inference for Political Science." *Political Analysis* 26(1): 54-71. (Sadly, we lack access to the newest issues of *Political Analysis* at Mizzou, but a working paper version can

be found here: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305114514 Flexible Causal Inference for International Relations](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305114514_Flexible_Causal_Inference_for_International_Relations))

Short assignment due before class: Complete exercise number 2 on voter turnout in Lemuria from "Practice: Building" at the end of Howard, Chapter 5. Be sure to complete all of the subparts.

Week Five: September 22 - Measurement and Unit of Analysis

Robert Adcock and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *The American Political Science Review* 95(3): 529-546.

Wouter Van Dooren , Chiara De Caluwe and Zsuzsanna Lonti. 2012. "How to Measure Public Administration Performance." *Public Performance & Management Review*, 35:3, 489-508

Daniela Beyer and Miriam Hänni. 2018. "Two Sides of the Same Coin? Congruence and Responsiveness as Representative Democracy's Currencies." *Policy Studies Journal* 46(S1): S13-S47.

Ajay Verghese. 2020. "Taking Other Religions Seriously: A Comparative Survey of Hindus in India." *Politics and Religion* 13(3): 604-638.

Andrew B. Hall, Jesse Yoder, and Nishant Karandikar. 2017. "Economic Distress and Voting: Evidence from the Subprime Mortgage Crisis." Working paper available here: http://www.andrewbenjaminhall.com/HKY_foreclosures.pdf

Recommended:

Jeffrey M. Wooldridge. 2016. *Introductory Econometrics, A Modern Approach*, 6th Edition. Cengage. Chapter/section 9-4 "Properties of OLS under Measurement Error." (PDF of this section on Canvas)

Andreas Schedler. 2012. "Judgment and Measurement in Political Science." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(1): 21-36.

Week Six: September 29 - Finding Data

Presentation from Sandy Schiefer, MU Library Subject Librarian for Government Information,

Military Science, Political Science, and Public Affairs

Eugene Bardach and Eric M. Patashnik. 2016. *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*. CQ Press. Part II - "Assembling Evidence." (Canvas)

Howard, Chapter 6

Short assignment due before class:

- Find a publicly available dataset that would be useful in answering a research question of interest to you. This could be from a government agency, an international organization, a think tank, the website of another researcher, or a repository like ICPSR or Harvard's Dataverse.
 - Do not write about your class project or another project you have already written. The goal of this short assignment is for you to look around for a dataset that is new to you and get some practice in thinking about how to put available data to work on a future project.
- Describe the important characteristics of the data set, including the source, file type, unit of analysis, sample size, availability of documentation (e.g., a codebook for a survey), longitudinal and geographic scope, etc.
- Clearly state your research question and a hypothesis or hypotheses.
- Enumerate the pros and cons of using the publicly available dataset in the ways you are envisioning. Possible points of discussion include the possibility of measurement error or bias, the appropriateness of the measures for your research questions or hypotheses, the unit of analysis, the longitudinal or geographic scope of the dataset, etc.
- Briefly describe how you as a scholar could extend or improve upon this dataset to use it in a novel way.
 - Real novelty involves some creativity and imagination. If another researcher has posted a dataset that covers the lower 48 US states, coding the additional data for Alaska and Hawaii, while perhaps somewhat helpful, would not be a very novel contribution. Similarly, we would obviously like a dataset that ends in 2014 to extend into the more recent past, but simply updating an old dataset is not a creative endeavor.

Thursday, October 1: Research Proposal due on Canvas

Week Seven: October 6 - Qualitative Approaches

Brady & Collier, Chapter 3 (Henry E. Brady, "Doing Good and Doing Better: How Far Does the Quantitative Template Get Us?")

Brady & Collier, Chapter 4 (Larry M. Bartels, "Some Unfulfilled Promises of Quantitative Imperialism")

Brady & Collier, Chapter 6 (Sydney Tarrow, "Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide")

Evan S. Lieberman. 2005. "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Methods Strategy for Comparative Research." *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 435-452.

Administration on Children, Youth & Families Office of Data, Analysis, Research & Evaluation. 2016. "Qualitative Research Methods in Program Evaluation: Considerations for Federal Staff." https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/acyf/qualitative_research_methods_in_program_evaluation.pdf

Recommended

Luz María Tejada Tayabas, Teresita Castillo León, and Joel Monarrez Espino. 2014. "Qualitative evaluation: A critical and interpretative complementary approach to improve health programs and services." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Health and Well-Being* 9:10.3402/qhw.v9.24417. Available here: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4142224/>

Week Eight: October 13 - Survey Research and Interviews

Don A. Dillman, Jolene D. Smyth and Leah Melani Christian. 2014. *Internet, Phone, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method, 4th Edition*. Wiley. Chapters 1, 4, and 12 (Canvas)

Adam J. Berinsky, Michele F. Margolis, and Michael W. Sances. 2014. "Separating the Shirkers from the Workers? Making Sure Respondents Pay Attention in Self-Administered Surveys." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(3): 739-753.

Layna Moseley. 2013. "Introduction. 'Just Talk to People'? Interviews in Contemporary Political Science." In Layna Moseley, ed., *Interview Research in Political Science*. Cornell University Press. (Canvas)

Review Bardach and Patashnik 2016 Part II (from Week Six: Finding Data)

Short assignment due before class:

- Think about a research project you could conduct with either surveys or in-depth, in-person interviews. You can use your class project if appropriate, or another project you are working on, or make up a new project.
- In a short (3-4 page) essay, discuss the relative advantages and disadvantages of using a survey as opposed to interviews for this particular project.
 - For both modes, address how you will recruit participants and what obstacles you might encounter to recruitment.
- Based on this analysis, offer your opinion of the most promising approach.

Week Nine: October 20 - Nonlinear, Moderating, and Mediating Relationships

Jacob M. Montgomery, Brendan Nyhan, and Michelle Torres. 2018. "How Conditioning on Posttreatment Variables Can Ruin Your Experiment and What to Do about It." *American Journal of Political Science* 62(3): 760-775.

Felix Elwert and Christopher Winship. 2014. "Endogenous Selection Bias: The Problem of Conditioning on a Collider Variable." *Annual Review of Sociology* 40: 31-53.

Dean Knox, Will Lowe, and Jonathan Mummolo. 2020. "Administrative Records Mask Racially Biased Policing." *American Political Science Review* 114(3): 619-637.

Wendy M. Rahn, Sarah E. Gollust, and Xuyang Tang. 2017. "Framing Food Policy: The Case of Raw Milk." *Policy Studies Journal* 45(2): 359-383.

Marlene Jugl. 2019. "Finding the Golden Mean: Country Size and the Performance of National Bureaucracies." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 29(1): 118-132.

Olga Löblová. 2018. "When Epistemic Communities Fail: Exploring the Mechanism of Policy Influence." *Policy Studies Journal* 46(1): 160-189.

Week Ten: October 27 - Experimental Design and Policy Evaluation

Adam Zelizer. 2018. "How Responsive Are Legislators to Policy Information? Evidence from a Field Experiment in a State Legislature." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. Published online

before print: <https://doi.org/10.1111/lsq.12206>

Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence F. Katz. 2016. "The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." *American Economic Review* 106(4): 855-902.

Lynne Grossmith, Catherine Owens, Will Finn, David Mann, Tom Davies, and Laura Baika. 2015. *Police, Camera, Evidence: London's Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial of Body Worn Video*. Report available here: <https://www.bja.gov/bwc/pdfs/CoPBWVreportNov2015.pdf>

Jörg Peters, Jörg Langbein, and Gareth Roberts. 2015. "Policy Evaluation, Randomized Control Trials, and External Validity - A Systematic Review." Ruhr Economic Papers #589. Available here: http://www.rwi-essen.de/media/content/pages/publikationen/ruhr-economic-papers/rep_15_589.pdf

Jesse Yoder, Cassandra Handan-Nader, Andrew Myers, Tobias Nowacki, Daniel M. Thompson, Jennifer A. Wu, Chenoa Yorgason, and Andrew B. Hall. 2020. "How Does Expanding Absentee Voting Affect Participation During COVID-19? Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Texas." Working paper dated August 11: http://www.andrewbenjaminhall.com/Yoder_et_al_absentee_short.pdf

Week Eleven: November 3 - New Directions in Policy and Administration Research I

Rebecca L. Perlman. 2020. "For Safety or Profit? How Science Serves the Strategic Interests of Private Actors." *American Journal of Political Science* 64(2): 293-308.

Jonathan J. Pierce, Holly L. Peterson, and Katherine C. Hicks. 2020. "Policy Change: An Advocacy Coalition Framework Perspective." *Policy Studies Journal* 48(1): 64-86.

Pablo Barberá, Andreu Casas, Jonathan Nagler, Patrick J. Egan, Richard Bonneau, John T. Jost, and Joshua T. Tucker. 2019. "Who Leads? Who Follows? Measuring Issue Attention and Agenda Setting by Legislators and the Mass Public Using Social Media Data." *American Political Science Review* 113(4): 883-901.

Iris Hui, Nicola Ulibarri, and Bruce Cain. 2020. "Patterns of Participation and Representation in Regional Water Collaboration." *Policy Studies Journal* 48(3): 754-781.

Short assignment due before class:

- Find a recent (in print no earlier than 2019) article that you believe represents something novel in the field of public policy or public administration, or the corresponding subfields in political science.
 - Articles that are currently published online before print are acceptable, as are manuscripts available on scholars' personal websites or online repositories (e.g., SSRN) that are listed as accepted by or forthcoming in a journal. As-yet-unaccepted working papers are not acceptable.
- Write a 1-2 page essay about the article expressing why you think it is novel and could represent a new direction in policy or administration research.
 - Does the article break from or refine existing theories or hypotheses?
 - Does the article innovate in terms of measurement, data, or approach?
 - How do the findings change what we thought we knew about this subject?
 - If you were going to conduct your own research project in this "new direction," what would it be? What would be the research question, hypothesis, and data? How would you build on the article in question?
- Week Twelve's reading list will be made up of the articles you choose.

Week Twelve: November 10 - New Directions in Policy and Administration Research II

Readings TBD

Short assignment due before class: Repeat Week Eleven's assignment with a different article.

Week Thirteen's reading list will be made up of the articles you choose.

Week Thirteen: November 17 - New Directions in Policy and Administration Research III

Readings TBD

Sunday, November 22: Initial paper draft due on Canvas

November 24 - Thanksgiving week - no class

Week Fourteen: December 1 - Presenting and Communicating with Broader Audiences; the Review Process

Markus Püschel. n.d. “Small Guide to Giving Presentations.” <https://users.ece.cmu.edu/~pueschel/teaching/guides/guide-presentations.pdf>

John Sides. 2019. “About the Monkey Cage.” https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/01/01/about-the-monkey-cage/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.bb1a668821b1
(Read the linked Contributors’ Guide document in its entirety)

Browse some recent posts on the London School of Economics' American Politics and Policy (LSE USAPP) blog: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/>.

Browse the Scholars Strategy Network website and materials, including some issue briefs by members: <https://scholars.org/>

Read revise-and-resubmit example documents provided on Canvas

Short assignment due before class:

- Select a post from the *Washington Post*'s Monkey Cage or LSE USAPP, or an SSN issue brief. You must select a post or brief that discusses a piece of scholarly research by the author that is also available to you (e.g., the author links to a working paper or the research is published). You may not select a post in which the author summarizes the research of others, or discusses research conducted exclusively for the blog post.
- What differences do you notice between the scholarly research and the post?
 - How does the tone differ? What about the terminology? Cite concrete examples here.
 - Does the author emphasize different findings or arguments in the blog post than they did in the scholarly research? Do they omit substantial parts of the research from the blog post? Why do you think they (or the editors) made these decisions?
 - How does the author discuss and present their analysis (data, methods) to the blog reader, and how does that differ from the way it is presented in the scholarly research?
- Write up a brief essay that summarizes your observations in advance of class. Conclude with your assessment of how well the researcher translated their findings for a general audience, and discuss what you would have done differently. Post this essay along with the relevant links to the appropriate discussion board on Canvas as well as in the online assignment.
- Be sure to review all of your classmates' submissions before class.

Week Fifteen: December 8 - Presentations in class

Tuesday, December 15: Final paper draft due on Canvas