Trinity College Dublin, The University of Dublin
PO3600: Research Methods for Political Science, 2015-2016

SYLLABUS

Lecturer Michaelmas term	**Lecturer Hilary term**
Tom Louwerse	Constantine Boussalis
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Office: 5.05 (College Green)	Office: 4.07 (College Green)
Office hours: Mondays 3.30-5 p.m.	Office hours: Thursdays, 2-4 p.m.

Tutor
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Module Description and Objectives

This module explores a variety of both qualitative and quantitative social science research to develop the skills for explaining causal mechanism in political phenomena. Especially, the class focuses on the logic of scientific inference, research design and measurement. This module also explores the uses and abuses of statistical reasoning in social and political studies. Students learn the basic rules of data analysis and the logic of statistical inference. The class covers various topics such as survey methodology, content analysis, (quasi) experiments, and policy analysis by doing such work themselves.

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Critically analyse existing political science and social science research on the basis of the research methods employed.
- Specify appropriate research questions in political science and construct effective research design strategies to answer these questions.
- Analyse quantitative data to uncover relationships between theoretically relevant variables.
- Effectively use statistical methods to conduct political science research.
- Effectively employ SPSS, a statistical software package, to conduct political science research.

Lectures

We will have two lectures per week. One of the lectures will be about research methods in general, while the other will focus on statistical methods. The lectures will add to the readings for each week by providing (political science) examples, highlighting the main points, explaining difficult concepts and methods and providing extra material which is not covered in the textbooks or additional readings.

Michaelmas term: Mondays 10-11 am (Arts 3074), Mondays noon-1 pm (Arts 5039)
Hilary term: Tuesdays 1-2 pm (Arts 2041B), 11 am-noon Thursday (Arts 3074)

Tutorial Sessions

The tutor for this class is Miriam Sorace. Participation in tutorial sessions is **mandatory**. It will be very difficult to do well on homework assignments, papers or the final exam if you do not attend tutorials regularly. Tutorials provide a forum for going over homework, similar problem sets, and topics covered in the lecture. The tutorials will also introduce the statistical software necessary to complete the assignments. Please note that it is necessary to be well prepared during tutorials (reading assigned materials, attending lectures, doing homework). The tutor will not repeat what is in the book or what was covered in the lecture. We assume that you have done that. The only way to learn methods and statistics well is by practising, so make sure to prepare your homework exercises well.

We will have **weekly tutorial sessions** from week 3 in the Michaelmas term (and again from week 2 in the Hilary term). There will be two tutorial groups; assignment to groups will be done during the first week of term. Once you have been assigned to a group, you can only attend that group's meetings unless you receive permission from the tutor to switch groups (either permanently or for a single session).

Michaelmas term: Tuesdays 11 am-noon (Arts 1013) **or** *Thursdays 4-5pm (Arts 1013)*
Hilary term: Tuesdays 11 am-noon (AP0.12) **or** *Thursdays 4-5pm (AP0.12)*

Contacting us

If there is a need to contact us about **practical matters**, please contact the lecturer when it concerns the module in general or the tutor when it concerns the tutorial groups specifically. You can contact us by e-mail, but note that we will respond only during normal office hours (and do not expect an immediate response).

When you have **substantive questions** about what we are covering in the course, please save up your questions for the Q&A during the lecture and for the tutorial group meetings. You can also visit the lecturer's office hours, but note that we expect that you will have attended the lecture and tutorial groups and done the homework first. Office hours are not intended to replace the lectures and tutorial groups. As a rule, we will not deal with substantive questions via e-mail.

Blackboard

We will provide module announcements via Blackboard. Moreover, all homework and paper assignments will be made available there.

If you are registered for this module in My TCD, you should also be automatically added to the Blackboard environment. Please make sure this is indeed the case. For students in PO360B or PO360C: contact the relevant lecturer directly if you do not see any content in the Blackboard module.

Literature

We will use the following text books in the module:

Manheim, J.B., R.C. Rich, L. Wilmat, C.L. Brians and J. Babb (2012) *Empirical Political Analysis: An Introduction to Research Methods.* Harlow: Pearson Education. ISBN: 1408204622

Field, A. (2013) *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS.* 4th edition (3rd edition may also be used, but relevant parts from the fourth edition should be obtained elsewhere). London: Sage.

It is essential that you acquire your own copy of Manheim et al. (2012), because we will read almost all of it. We will read only about half of Field (2013), but it is recommended that you get your own copy as it is a good reference book. Make sure that you have access to the chapters that we will be using in class.

In addition, we will use a number of journal articles and book chapters. Most journal articles will be freely available from the link included in the reading list (from campus computers). If this does not work (or if you are not on campus), search for the article via Stella Search (or Google Scholar) and log in to gain access.

SPSS

We will use the statistical software package IBM SPSS Statistics (version 21, version 22 can also be used) in this module. It is imperative that you install this on your computer <u>as soon as possible</u>. Please refer to IS Services how to obtain your **free copy**:
http://isservices.tcd.ie/software/kb/student_software.php

Grading

For students taking the entire module (PO3600), the final grade consists of the following parts:

- 60% of the mark is based on an **end-of-year exam**, which covers both research methods and statistics. The exam will consist of short descriptions of relevant concepts, short essay questions and the interpretation of a statistical model.
- 40% of the mark is based on **coursework**. This consists of the following parts:
  - 4 homework assignments counting 12.5% each towards the coursework mark (2 during MT and 2 during HT)
  - 2 papers counting 25% towards the coursework mark each (one at the end of each term). These papers will consist of setting up a (small) research proposal (based on secondary data) and executing it (including a limited statistical analysis). This work will be done in pairs submitting joint papers. Further information on the paper assignment will be made available via Blackboard.
  - Tutorial participation: those who attend and participate in the tutorial sessions in a term (no more than two sessions can be missed) will receive 5 bonus marks (per term) on their coursework grade (thus a total of 10 marks can be awarded for

sufficient tutorial participation during the entire year). Students need to be present and prepare the homework exercises for that week, bringing along their written answers.[1]

For (exchange) students taking the module for only one term (PO360B/PO360C), the following grading scheme applies:

- 20% of the mark is based on 2 homework assignments (10% each).
- 80% of the mark is based on two papers: a research proposal (30%) and a final paper based on that proposal (50%). Further information on the paper assignment will be made available via Blackboard.
- Tutorial participation: those who attend and participate in the tutorial sessions in a term (no more than two sessions can be missed) will receive 4 bonus marks on their grade. Students need to be present and prepare the homework exercises for that week, bringing along their written answers.[1]

Plagiarism

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all coursework is **individual** and should be **original** (you should not re-use parts of a paper you wrote for another module, for example).

You need to **reference** any literature you use in the correct manner. This is true for use of quotations as well as summarizing someone else's ideas in your own words. Useful information regarding essay writing may be found in the political science undergraduate student handbook, on http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism as well as http://www.plagiarism.org. When in doubt, consult with the lecturer before you hand in an assignment. Plagiarism is regarded as a major offence that **will** have serious implications.

Paper Submission

All coursework must be submitted via turnitin.com. There will be separate Turnitin modules for Michaelmas term and Hilary term:

	Class ID	Password
Michaelmas term	10689541	po3600
Hilary term	10767043	po3600

All coursework deadlines are strictly adhered to. Extensions on deadlines will only be granted in exceptional circumstances; relevant documentation (for example a medical certificate, or a letter/e-mail from your college tutor explaining the circumstances) should be provided when an extension is requested. All late work, unless excused **beforehand**, will have 5 marks deducted for each day beyond the deadline, as stated in the political science undergraduate student handbook.

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[1] Note that the answers will not be graded, but you should be able to demonstrate at least a serious attempt at the homework exercises. If preparation is insufficient according to the tutor, you will receive a warning. Next time(s) the preparation is deemed insufficient, you will be counted as absent for that tutorial.

Overview of lectures & tutorial sessions

Michaelmas term

Week	Lecture Research methods	Lecture Statistics	Tutorial
1	Why do I need to learn about research methods?	Why statistics? The problem of sampling	-
2	Theories & concepts	Univariate statistics: Measurement levels and measures of central tendency	-
3	Variables, hypotheses & measurement	Univariate statistics: Measures of dispersion and standard errors	Theories & concepts Measurement levels & measures of central tendency
4	Measurement problems & The research plan	Univariate statistics: confidence intervals & significance testing	Hypotheses & measurement Standard deviation & error
5	**PUBLIC HOLIDAY**	**PUBLIC HOLIDAY**	Measurement problems & Confidence Intervals
6	Qualitative versus quantitative research?	Presenting data: tables and charts	Qualitative & quantitative Graphing in SPSS
7	**STUDY WEEK**	**STUDY WEEK**	**STUDY WEEK**
8	Experimental research	Bivariate statistics: cross tables	Review of week 1-6
9	From experimental to quasi-experimental research	Bivariate statistics: chi square & measures of association	Experimental research, cross tables
10	Survey research	Bivariate statistics: correlation	Quasi-experimental research, chi square + measures of association
11	Scaling & Working with aggregate data	Bivariate statistics: t-tests	Surveys, scatterplot and correlation
12	Data preparation and data processing	Bivariate statistics: proportions	T-tests, proportions and opinion polls

Homework assignment and paper deadlines MT

Homework 1:   Wednesday 11 November 2015, 6 pm
Homework 2:   Friday 11 December 2015, 6 pm

Research proposal (PO360**B** only): Friday 13 November 2015
Paper: Friday 18 December 2015, 6 pm

Hilary term

Week	Lecture **Research Methods**	Lecture **Statistics**	Tutorial
1	Review of research questions / Content analysis I	Reviewing univariate and bivariate statistics	-
2	Content analysis II	Ordinary Least Squares Regression: an introduction	Content analysis, review of univariate and bivariate statistics
3	Comparative research	Multiple regression	Content analysis, Simple regression
4	Case study methodology	Multiple regression: testing the assumptions	Comparative method, Multiple regression
5	Formal analysis / rational choice	Interpreting and improving regression models	Case studies, regression assumptions
6	Elite and specialised interviewing & Focus group methodology	Non-parametric tests	Rational choice, improving regression models
7	**STUDY WEEK**	**STUDY WEEK**	**STUDY WEEK**
8	Direct observation, discourse analysis & hermeneutics	Logistic regression analysis I	Interviewing, Non-parametric tests
9	The research report	**PUBLIC HOLIDAY**	Regression Q&A (Tuesday only)
10	*Q&A*	Logistic regression analysis II	Logistic regression
11	*Research project progress (Short presentations, Q&A)*	*Research project progress (Short presentations, Q&A)*	Logistic regression
12	*Research project progress (Short presentations, Q&A)*	*Research project progress (Short presentations, Q&A)*	Q&A

Note: Hilary term topics and readings are indicative only. We reserve the right to revise these before the start of Hilary term.

Homework assignment and paper deadlines HT: to be announced

Readings per week

* = suggested reading (otherwise it is required)

Michaelmas term

Week 1

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 1	Field, Chapter 1 (1.1 to 1.5 including)

Week 2

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 2 & 3	Field, Chapter 1 (section 1.6-1.7)
Gerring, J. (1999). What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences. *Polity*, *31*(3), 357–393. doi:10.2307/3235246	Manheim et al., Chapter 16

Week 3

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 4	Field, Chapter 2 (up to section 2.5.1 including)
Freedom House. (2010). Freedom in the World, 2010 edition. Introduction and Methodology. http://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2010/introduction	Field, Chapter 3
Munck, G. L., & Verkuilen, J. (2002). Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices. *Comparative Political Studies*, *35*(1), 5–34. doi:10.1177/001041400203500101	

Week 4

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 5	Field, Chapter 2 (section 2.5.2 to 2.13)

<u>Week 5: Public holiday</u>

<u>Week 6</u>

Research methods	*Statistics*
King, Gary, R.O. Keohane and S. Verba (1994), *Designing Social Inquiry*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, Chapter 1 and 2 Mahoney, J., & Goertz, G. (2006). A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research. *Political Analysis*, 14(3), 227–249. doi:10.1093/pan/mpj017	Field, Chapter 4 Manheim et al., Chapter 15

<u>Week 7: Study week</u>

<u>Week 8</u>

Research methods	*Statistics*
Manheim et al., Chapter 6 (p. 103-108) Mintz, A., Redd, S. B., & Vedlitz, A. (2006). Can We Generalize from Student Experiments to the Real World in Political Science, Military Affairs, and International Relations? *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *50*(5), 757–776. doi:10.1177/0022002706291052 * Campbell, R., & Cowley, P. (2013). Rich Man, Poor Man, Politician Man: Wealth Effects in a Candidate Biography Survey Experiment. *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*. doi:10.1111/1467-856X.12002	Manheim et al., Chapter 17

<u>Week 9</u>

Research methods	*Statistics*
Manheim et al., Chapter 6 (p. 108 – p. 115) King, Gary, R.O. Keohane and S. Verba (1994), *Designing Social Inquiry*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, Chapter 3 Broockman, D. E. (2013). Black Politicians Are More Intrinsically Motivated to Advance Blacks' Interests: A Field Experiment Manipulating Political Incentives. American Journal of Political Science, 57(3), 521–536. doi:10.1111/ajps.12018 Campbell, Donald T. 1968. "The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding: Time-Series Data in Quasi-Experimental Analysis." *Law and Society Review* 3(1): 33–54. doi:10.2307/3052794	Field, Chapter 18 (sections 18.1 to 18.3.5 including, 18.4, and 18.5)

<u>Week 10</u>

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 7, 8 and 9 * Schyns, P., & Koop, C. (2009). Political Distrust and Social Capital in Europe and the USA. *Social Indicators Research*, *96*(1), 145–167. doi:10.1007/s11205-009-9471-4	Field, Chapter 7

<u>Week 11</u>

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 10	Field, Chapter 9

<u>Week 12</u>

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 11	Franklin, Charles H. 2007. "The 'Margin of Error' for Differences in Polls." https://abcnews.go.com/images/Polling Unit/MOEFranklin.pdf (August 13, 2014).

Hilary term

<u>Week 1</u>

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 12 *Neuendorf, K. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.	

<u>Week 2</u>

Research methods	Statistics
Jagers, J., & Walgrave, S. (2007). Populism as political communication style: An empirical study of political parties' discourse in Belgium. *European Journal of Political Research*, *46*(3), 319–345. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6765.2006.00690.x Volkens, A. (2007). Strengths and weaknesses of approaches to measuring policy positions of parties. *Electoral Studies*, *26*(1), 108–120. doi:10.1016/j.electstud.2006.04.003 Voeten, E. (2004). Resisting the lonely superpower: Responses of states in the United Nations to US dominance.	Field, Chapter 8 (8.1 to 8.4 including)

Journal of Politics, *66*(3), 729–754.
doi:10.1111/j.1468-2508.2004.00274.x

Week 3

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 13 Gerring, J. (2004). What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for? *American Political Science Review*, *98*(2), 341–354. doi:10.1017/S0003055404001182 *Yin, R. K. (2013). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (5th edition). London: SAGE Publications Inc.	Field, Chapter 8 (8.5-8.7 and 8.9)

Week 4

Research methods	Statistics
Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *12*(2), 219–245. doi:10.1177/1077800405284363 Seawright, J., & Gerring, J. (2008). Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options. *Political Research Quarterly*, *61*(2), 294–308. doi:10.1177/1065912907313077 *Gerring, J. (2006). Single-Outcome Studies: A Methodological Primer. *International Sociology*, *21*(5), 707–734. doi:10.1177/0268580906067837	Field, Chapter 5

Week 5

Research methods	Statistics
Osborne, M. J. (2003). *An Introduction to Game Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1 & 2 available from http://www.economics.utoronto.ca/osborne/igt/intro.pdf and http://www.economics.utoronto.ca/osborne/igt/nash.pdf Lupia, A., & Strøm, K. (1995). Coalition termination and the strategic timing of parliamentary elections. *American Political Science Review*, *89*(3), 648–665. doi: 10.2307/2082980	Field, Chapter 8 (section 8.8 only) Field, Chapter 10 (section 10.5 only)

Week 6

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 19 & 20	Field, Chapter 6

Week 7: Study week

Week 8

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 21 &22 *Manheim et al., Chapter 23	Field, Chapter 19 (19.1 to 19.5 including)

Week 9

Research methods	Statistics
Manheim et al., Chapter 24	(Public holiday)

Week 10

Research methods	Statistics
	Field, Chapter 19 (19.1 to 19.8 including)

Week 11

No readings, research presentations	

Week 12

Research methods	Statistics
No readings, research presentations	

The different editions of the Field book

We recommend using the fourth edition (2013) of Andy Fields 'Discovering Statistics Using (IBM) SPSS (Statistics)', but the third edition (2009) may also be used (although you might need to obtain a few chapters that are not included in the third edition). The chapters in the reading list refer to the fourth edition, so please use the conversion table below to find the similar chapters in the third edition.

Note that chapter 5 in the fourth edition has been particularly updated, so you'll need to check that in the fourth edition.

Week	Third edition	Fourth edition	Title
MT 1	1 (1.1-1.6)	1 (1.1 – 1.5)	Why is my evil lecturer forcing me to learn statistics?
MT 2	1 (1.7)	1 (1.6-1.7)	Why is my evil lecturer forcing me to learn statistics?
MT 3	2 (2.1-2.5.1)	2 (2.1-2.5.1)	Everything you (n)ever wanted to know about statistics
	3	3	The (IBM) SPSS (Statistics) environment
MT 4	2 (2.5.2-2.6)	2 (2.5.2-2.13)	Everything you (n)ever wanted to know about statistics
MT 6	4	4	Exploring data with graphs
MT 9	18 (18.1-18.5)	18 (18.1-18.3.5, 18.4 & 18.5)	Categorical data *(skip everything on log-linear analysis)*
MT 10	6	7	Correlation
MT 11	9	9	Comparing two means
HT 2	7 (7.1-7.4)	8 (8.1-8.4)	Regression
HT 3	7 (7.55-7.8 and 7.10)	8 (8.5-8.7 and 8.9)	Regression
HT 4	5	5	Exploring assumptions / The beast of bias
HT 5	7 (7.10 only)	8 (8.8 only)	Regression
	7 (7.11 only)	10 (10.5 only)	Regression / Moderation, mediation and …
HT 6	15	6	Non-parametric tests/models
HT 8	8 (8.1-8.5)	19 (19.1-19.5)	Logistic regression
HT 10	8 (8.6-8.8)	19 (19.1-19.8)	Logistic regression