

# Political Science 3379: Research and Writing in Political Science

Fall 2018

M/W/F 10:00AM – 10:50 AM

LDB 218

**(CHSS 495 after first session)**

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Patane

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Campus Address: CHSS 470

Office Hours: M/W 2:00pm-4:00pm

## Course Description

How do we properly perform social science research? How do we learn to speak the “language” of social scientific inquiry so that we can answer our questions about the world? This course is designed to introduce students to the basics of research. They will learn how to think scientifically about questions of social science, even if the behavior they’re interested in doesn’t appear so scientific. Later, students will learn about the components of a proper research project, and the basics of measurement. Throughout we will look to examples of literature to guide our writing, and students will begin to produce their own.

## Blackboard

All communication for this course will be conducted via the course’s Blackboard site and University email. Any supplementary material, assignments, or changes to the course structure will be made available on this site. Each student should ensure that they have access to these materials and are able to receive emails through their student account. Please note that I cannot accept or respond to student emails that come from a non-university address.

## Course Material

There is no assigned text for this course. Instead, readings will be provided via pdf on the course Blackboard page. Each week, on the “Course Readings” page, students will find a folder corresponding to that week’s topic. Normally, it will contain one article or book selection focusing on that week’s topic and one literature review provided as an example of the kind of social science writing that you will be able to produce when the course concludes. It is necessary that you complete these readings before the first class of the week, as we will use them over the course of discussion.

## Grading and Course Requirements

Literature Review Topic Proposal

Literature Review Draft 1

Literature Review Draft 2  
Data Analysis Proposal  
Final Exam

## **Grading Scale**

A: 90-100  
B: 80-89  
C: 70-79  
D: 60-69  
F: Below 60

## **Information and University Policies**

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

[http://www.shsu.edu/~slo\\_www/](http://www.shsu.edu/~slo_www/)

### **Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy:**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/861001.pdf>

**Students with Disabilities Policy:**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail [disability@shsu.edu](mailto:disability@shsu.edu)). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/7ff819c3-39f3-491d-b688-db5a330ced92.pdf>

**Visitors in the Classroom:**

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

**Copyright on Lecture and Course Materials**

Copyright 2018 (Christopher Patane) as to this syllabus and all lectures. During this course, students are prohibited from selling notes or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the instructor teaching this course.

**Mental Health**

Sometimes the study of Political Science involves dealing with difficult material. In some cases these may reflect or reference your own personal, family, or group experiences. Other times, life events may interfere with your ability to succeed in class. We do not want neglect our own health or well-being. If you need support, the Counseling Center can be reached at 936-294-1720. The [website](#) also contains self-help resources, and those services available in the Huntsville community.

As with all other parts of the course, students are welcome and encouraged to come talk to me to voice their concerns, seek support, or discuss accommodation for coursework after a crisis.

## **Class Outline**

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. Changes will be announced in class and on the course Blackboard site. It is the responsibility of the student to take note of any changes.

**For all readings, see the respective Blackboard folder.**

### **Week 1, August 22 & 24: What Writing Should (and Shouldn't) Look Like**

Friday August 24: Interests due on Blackboard.

### **Week 2, August 27, 29, & 31: Thinking about Politics Scientifically**

### **Week 3, September 5 & 7: Thinking about Politics Scientifically II**

Monday, September 3, No class, Labor Day

Proposal Due, Friday September 7

### **Week 4, September 10, 12, & 14: Reviewing Literature**

### **Week 5, September 17, 19, & 21: Theory Building and Research Design**

### **Week 6, September 24, 26, 28: Measurement**

### **Week 7, October 1, 3, & 5: Measurement II**

Writing Workshop Day: Friday October 5.

### **Week 8, October 8, 10, & 12: Errors**

Literature Review Draft 1 Due, Friday October 12

### **Week 9, October 15, 17, 19: Samples**

### **Week 10, October 22, 24, 26: Qualitative Research**

### **Week 11, October 29, 31, & November 2: Ethics in Research**

### **Week 12, November 5, 7, & 9: Qualitative Research II/Quantitative Research**

Writing Workshop Day: Friday November 9

### **Week 13, November 12, 14, & 16: Quantitative Research II**

Literature Review Draft 2 Due, Friday November 16

### **Week 14, November 19, 21, & 23: Data Analysis Workshop**

No Class: November 21 & 23, Thanksgiving Break

**Week 15, November 26, 28, & 30:**

Writing Workshop: November 26

Exam Review: November 28

Final Exam, Friday November 30

**Week 16, December 3 & 5: Finals Week**

Data Analysis Proposal Due, Monday, December 3