

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management

Spring

2017

Political Data and Analytics

6403.10

3 Credits

Thursdays, 7:10 PM - 9:40 PM

Gov 103

BASIC INFORMATION

Instructor

Melissa Milne

Contact Information

Email Address: mjmilne@gwu.edu

Cell Number: (703) 517-7703

Communication

Email is the best way to reach me. I will respond within 24 business hours to all student e-mails.

I have office hours on Thursdays, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in Monroe 462. Other in-person meeting times may be available on Thursdays or we can meet by phone if you send me a couple days/times you are available so we can find a mutually acceptable time.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required:

Articles posted to Blackboard (see Weekly Discussion, Readings, and Assignments/Actions Schedule below).

Text: George, Darren and Paul Mallory. *IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step By Step: A Simple Guide and Reference*. 14th ed. New York: Routledge, 2016.

SPSS Software: Go to www.hearne.software/basegradpack and choose which product you need based on your operating system and whether you are using a PC or a Mac (~ \$35 – you must use your GWU email for electronic delivery to take advantage of this pricing):

- IBM SPSS 6 month Grad Pack Base **v24** (electronic delivery) if you are running Windows 10 or Mac OSX 10.10
- IBM SPSS 6 month Grad Pack Base **v22** (electronic delivery) if you are running a less recent operating system than Windows 10 or Mac OSX 10.10

THE COURSE

Course Description

Today's political managers must be able to answer complex questions; construct comprehensive strategic plans; target specific stakeholders to gather and disseminate information; influence policy decisions; and predict needs, preferences, and outcomes. In order to be successful at these tasks, you must rely on data-driven evidence versus opinion. This course is divided into two parts – the first part focuses on the theory and methods of reliable and valid research design in order to provide a sound foundation for the second part, which emphasizes hands-on, practical application of quantitative and qualitative skills to better inform decisions and actions and increase the likelihood of success.

Course Learning Objectives

As a result of completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Construct a reliable and valid research design based on the purpose of your political management questions that demonstrates the data required to answer the questions will be appropriate and accessible in a timely manner;
2. Collect appropriate primary or secondary data to answer political management questions;
3. Apply proper analytics and correctly interpret the results to answer political management questions;
4. Make actionable recommendations to political management questions based on findings from analytic results;
5. Prepare a report and presentation documenting the purpose, summary of what's already known, methods, results, and recommendations for political management questions; and
6. Critically evaluate other's research designs, data, analytics, and results to inform decisions and strategy.

Course Requirements

I. Substantive Course Requirements (85% of final grade)

A. Individual Project Proposal	5%
B. Homework	20%
C. Group Project	20%
D. Individual Project	25%
E. Individual Project Presentation	15%

- A. Individual Project Proposal (5%):** Select a political management research question that you find interesting for your Individual Project and complete the Individual Project Proposal located on Blackboard.
- B. Homework (20%):** Apply the course concepts and analytics learned in class via three homework assignments. *Note: You can collaborate with classmates on homework but all submissions must be your own work, in your own words.*
- C. Group Project (20%):** Using political management questions that your group finds interesting, construct and disseminate an electronic survey, including informed consent, to your classmates, professor, and others, and analyze data to present statistical evidence of your results to the class. Your group may choose alternatively to conduct a focus group rather than a survey, with my permission on proposed participants, to answer your political management questions. Present purpose, methods, results, actionable recommendations to policy based on results, and recommendations to improve your research design to the class.

- D. Individual Project (25%):** Use empirical evidence to explore the political management research question posed in your Individual Project Proposal. Detailed requirements will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.
1. Construct a literature review consisting of a minimum of **four** empirical sources to summarize what’s already known about the relationship between the independent and dependent variables you have selected to study. *Note: empirical pieces use statistical analysis to whether the independent variable(s) have a significant effect on the dependent variable – they are lengthy and have methodology and findings sections);*
 2. Select a secondary dataset(s) from a legitimate source (e.g., General Social Survey, National Election Study, U.S. Census Data, Department of Justice, Pew Research, World Development Indicators, etc.) or construct your own survey (with my approval) to gather primary data;
 3. Analyze the variables and relationship(s) in SPSS using appropriate statistical tests;
 4. Draw conclusions and make actionable recommendations based on results; and
 5. Acknowledge shortcomings and make recommendations for future research improvement.
- E. Individual Project Presentation (15%):** Using PowerPoint or a similar presentation tool, present your Individual Project purpose, methods, analysis, findings, actionable recommendations to policy based on results, and recommendation to improve research design to the class.

II. General Class Participation (15% of final grade)

You are expected to fully prepare and contribute conscientious and professional input to the course dialogue, including thoughtful knowledge of assigned readings. You are also expected to fully participate in an equitable, cooperative, and respectable manner with all group activities and deliverables. You will rate your own and your teammates’ participation and contribution towards development of group deliverables to help ensure equal labor distribution and build cooperation. Your honesty is imperative and all data collected is strictly confidential.

Failure to complete reading and class assignments, including all group work and evaluations (see Weekly Lecture, Readings, and Assignments Schedule below) will lower your grade. You are responsible for making sure your name is on the class attendance sheet each week (see Attendance Policy below).

GRADING

The following is the grading scale for all GSPM courses:

Grade*	Grading Standard
A 94-100	Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.
A- 90-93	Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.
B+ 87-89	Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.
B 83-86	Satisfactory work, but needs reworking and more effort. Note that although not a failing grade, at the graduate level, anything below a “B” is viewed as unacceptable.
B- 80-82	You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.
C+ 77-79	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
C 73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C- 70-72 (lowest grade to pass)	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F Below 70	Unacceptable performance or inability to submit the assignment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Attendance Policy

Attending class is required. Should you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, please contact me as soon as you are aware of the issue to let me know you will absent; otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence and will negatively count against your participation grade. **Note: Three or more class absences during the semester will result in a failing class participation grade.**

Out-of-Class/ Independent Learning Expectation

Over the course of the semester, students will spend at least 2 hours (100 minutes) per week in class. Required reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 7 hours (350 minutes) per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 25 hours in instructional time and 87.5 hours preparing for class.

Late Assignments

Late work is not accepted.

Blackboard Site

A Blackboard website has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to use the site to access course materials, submit papers, engage in discussion board conversations, and obtain their grades. Students can access the site at <https://blackboard.gwu.edu>. Tech support is available at 202-994-4948 or helpdesk.gwu.edu.

Academic Integrity

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>.

Support for Students with Disabilities

GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS. Please also be sure to notify me of your disability, should you require accommodations. Additional information is available at www.gwu.edu/~dss.

In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class

If we experience an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave here, we will meet at the lobby level of the Media & Public Affairs Building (805 21st Street, NW) in order to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University’s operating status: <http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/>.

Course Evaluation

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting any/all of the following:

Dr. Beatriz Cuartas
Deputy Director, Political Management Program
beatrizcuartas@gwu.edu | 202-994-6000

Dr. Jack Prostko
Associate Dean for Learning and Faculty Development
College of Professional Studies
jackp@gwu.edu | 202-994-3592

Suzanne Farrand
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM
sfarrand@gwu.edu | 202-994-9309

WEEKLY DISCUSSION, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS/ACTIONS SCHEDULE*

Come prepared to class – complete readings and assignments before class date.

Date	Discussion	Readings	Assignments/Actions
1/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introductions ▪ Syllabus Review ▪ Scientific Approach to Political Management Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lying with Statistics</i> (pdf available on Blackboard) ▪ Best, Joel (2001), Telling the Truth About Damned Lies and Statistics, <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, 47 (34) (pdf available on Blackboard) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Form teams of four and come up with a name for your group; discuss ideas for your Group Project
1/26	<p>Hypotheses, Variables, and Relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Normative v. Empirical Exercises on Blackboard ▪ George, D. and Mallory, P. (2016), <i>IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step</i>, Ch. 1 and Ch. 2a for PC users or Ch. 2b for Mac users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group name and list of team members and contact info due via email to professor NLT 7:10 p.m. 1/26 ▪ Complete Normative v. Empirical Exercises for discussion in class 1/26
2/2	<p>Literature Review and Ethics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Literature Review Guide (available on Blackboard) ▪ Knopf, J. (2006), Doing a Literature Review, <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i>, 39, pg. 127 – 132 (pdf available on Blackboard) ▪ Skim GW’s Lit Review Guide (somewhat old but still useful): http://www.gwu.edu/~litrev/ 	
2/9	<p>Measurement</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual Project Proposal due via <u>paper copy in class</u> AND electronic copy to Blackboard link and Group Discussion Board NLT 7:10 p.m. 2/9
2/16	<p>Research Design and Ethics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taylor-Powell, E. (1998), <i>Questionnaire Design: Asking Questions with a Purpose</i> (pdf available on Blackboard) ▪ McGeeney, K. (2016), <i>Pew Research Center Will Call 75% Cellphones for Surveys in 2016</i>, http://pewrsr.ch/1ReJIK6 ▪ Duke University, <i>Guidelines for Conducting a Focus Group</i> (pdf available on Blackboard) ▪ Skim GWU Institutional Review Board (IRB) Information: https://humanresearch.gwu.edu/about-office-human-research-ohr ▪ Classic experiments that raised ethical questions: http://www.prisonexp.org/ and http://www.stanleymilgram.com/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

2/23	Sampling and Statistical Inference		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Link to Draft Group Survey or copy of focus group questions and agenda due to professor via email NLT 7:10 p.m. 2/23 – you cannot distribute your survey to your sample or conduct your focus group until you have my approval. Your draft should be polished and tested before you send it to me for approval.
3/2	Descriptive Statistics and Univariate Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ George, D. and Mallory, P. (2016), <i>IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step</i>, Ch. 6 and 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Send out Group Project Survey NLT midnight on 3/ or conduct Group Project Focus Group NLT 3/7
3/9	Cross-tabulation Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skim cross-tab data: http://mediarelations.gwu.edu/battleground-poll ▪ George, D. and Mallory, P. (2016), <i>IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step</i>, Ch. 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HW1 due via <u>paper copy in class</u> AND electronic copy to Blackboard link NLT 7:10 p.m. 3/9
3/16	Spring Break – No Class		
3/23	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-Tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ George, D. and Mallory, P. (2016), <i>IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step</i>, Ch. 11 and 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft literature review portion of Individual Project due to Group’s Discussion Board and Blackboard link NLT 7:10 p.m. 3/23
3/30	Correlation and Linear Regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ George, D. and Mallory, P. (2016), <i>IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step</i>, Ch. 10 and 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HW2 due via <u>paper copy in class</u> AND electronic copy to Blackboard link NLT 7:10 p.m. 3/30
4/6	Multivariate Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ George, D. and Mallory, P. (2016), <i>IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step</i>, Ch. 16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Checklist evaluations of teammate’s literature reviews due to Group’s Discussion Board and Blackboard link NLT 7:10 p.m. 4/6
4/13	Data Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ George, D. and Mallory, P. (2016), <i>IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Step by Step</i>, Ch. 3 and 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data due NLT 7:10 p.m. 4/13 for Individual Project, ready to be uploaded into SPSS ▪ HW#3 due via <u>paper copy in class</u> NLT 7:10 p.m. 4/13
4/20	Group Project Presentations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group Project PowerPoint presentation due to Blackboard link NLT 3:00 p.m. AND one paper copy due in class NLT 7:10 p.m. 4/20 ▪ Evaluation of group members’ participation due via Blackboard survey link NLT midnight 4/23 ▪ Presentation Evaluations (5 total – one for each group, <u>including your own group</u>) due via Blackboard survey link NLT midnight 4/23

4/27	Individual Project Presentations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual Project PowerPoint presentation due to Blackboard link NLT 3:00 p.m. AND one paper copy due in class NLT 7:10 p.m. 4/27
5/4	Individual Project Due	<p>No class. Individual Projects due via paper copy to the box with my name on it in the Poli Sci office in Monroe 440 <u>AND</u> electronic copies of paper (one Word copy and one PDF copy) and SPSS data file due to Blackboard link <u>NLT 3:00 p.m.</u> (office closes at 5:00 p.m.)</p>	

*The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

Copyright Statement

Unless explicitly allowed by the instructor, course materials, class discussions, and examinations are created for and expected to be used by class participants only. The recording and rebroadcasting of such material, by any means, is forbidden.