

**Political Analysis**  
POLS 3001-001, Spring 2025  
Marriott Library 1150  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:25-2:45pm

**Instructor:** Dr. David De Micheli

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Office location: Gardner Commons, Suite 3345, Office 3229

Office hours: Fridays, 11am-12pm

Office hours sign-up: <https://calendly.com/ddemicheli>

### **Required Materials**

All students in this course are required to source access to two books:

- Agresti, Alan. *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Pearson.
- Howard, Christopher. *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*, U Chicago Press, 2017.

These required materials are available via Inclusive Access and can be accessed digitally via Canvas. Used, hard copies of the Howard book can be purchased online at low cost. All other assigned readings will be provided via Canvas.

Additionally, students will require access to Stata statistical software. Students ***need not*** purchase access to Stata, which is very expensive. It can be accessed **for free** via CSBS Computing's Virtual Lab, on computers in Marriott Library, or in the "open labs" in Gardner Commons. All work in this class can be completed using on-campus computers, but you will likely find it convenient to access this software on a personal laptop or desktop. Long-term laptop loans are available from Marriott Library.

### **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to research design and methods for the analysis of social and political phenomena. Its purpose is to familiarize students with the nuts and bolts of research design, including case selection and sampling, hypothesis and theory development, statistical testing and regression, and qualitative approaches to data analysis. It will also introduce students to modern statistical software and coding, and standards of data transparency and reproducibility. This course takes an applied approach, asking students to apply these skills on a regular basis, and culminating in an independent research note.

### **Course Objectives**

By the end of the semester, students who apply themselves to the work in this course will be able to:

- develop tractable research questions and articulate precise hypotheses;
- identify methods appropriate for testing hypotheses;
- conduct descriptive and inferential analyses;
- build or clean quantitative data for statistical testing;
- write statistical code using modern software;
- conduct regression analysis; and
- present and interpret findings from original research.

## Teaching and Learning Methods

This is a combined lecture/laboratory course. I will primarily deliver the major concepts, theories, and empirical application during class meetings, but students are expected and encouraged to play an active role in the lecture by asking questions and identifying points of confusion in either lecture or readings. In order to make class as productive as possible, students are strongly urged to come to class having complete all assigned readings for the week. You don't need to understand everything you read; simply finish the assigned reading and bring questions. After the week's lecture, students will apply the ideas learned in class and from the readings to lab assignments and their independent research notes.

## University Policies

- 1. *The Americans with Disabilities Act.*** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access. Given the nature of this course, attendance is required and adjustments will only be permitted as required by Policy 6-100(III)(O). If you need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this attendance policy due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA). CDA will work with us to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate. In compliance with ADA requirements, some students may need to record course content. Any recordings of course content are for personal use only, should not be shared, and should not be made publicly available. Recordings should be destroyed at the end of the course.
- 2. *University Safety Statement.*** The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit <https://safeu.utah.edu>
- 3. *Addressing Sexual Misconduct.*** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which Includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 383 South University Street, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

**Lauren's Promise:** Lauren's Promise is a vow that anyone – faculty, staff, students, parents, and community members – can take to indicate to others that they represent a safe haven for sharing incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking. Anyone who makes Lauren's Promise vows to: 1.) listen to and believe those individuals who are being threatened or experiencing sexual assault, dating violence or stalking; 2.) represent a safe haven for sharing incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking; and 3.) change campus culture that responds poorly to dating violence and stalking. By making Lauren's Promise, individuals are helping to change campus cultures that respond poorly to dating violence and stalking throughout the nation.

4. **Academic Misconduct Statement.** It is expected that students adhere to University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-410.php>.
5. **Diversity Statement.** I stand in support of compassion, dignity, value-of-life, equity, inclusion and justice for all individuals regardless of color, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, language, socioeconomic status, ability, gender, gender identity or expression, immigration status, or any type of marginalization. I stand in support of making our society more inclusive, just, and equitable for all individuals. I stand against individual and systemic discrimination in all its various forms.
6. **Undocumented Student Support Statement.** Immigration is a complex phenomenon with broad impact—those who are directly affected by it, as well as those who are indirectly affected by their relationships with family members, friends, and loved ones. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be requested from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from mixed-status families. To learn more, please contact the Dream Center at 801.213.3697 or visit <https://dream.utah.edu>.
7. **Basic Needs Student Support Statement.** Success at The University of Utah includes learning about and using available resources. The Basic Needs Collective (BNC) is a coordinated resource referral hub. They educate about and connect students to campus and community resources to help them meet their basic needs. As a central location for resource referrals related to food, housing, health insurance, managing finances, legal services, mental health, etc., any student experiencing difficulty with basic needs is encouraged to contact them. Drop into their office located in the Union basement or schedule with them online for an in-person or virtual visit through their webpage: <https://basicneeds.utah.edu/>.
8. **Drop/Withdrawal.** The last day to drop (delete) this course, or elect CR/NC, is Friday, August 30, 2024. The last day to withdraw from this course is Friday, October 28, 2024.
9. **Other important information to consider:**
  - a. Student Code: <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>
  - b. Accommodation Policy (see Section Q): <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>
10. **The University of Utah provides resources for some students in need, including for:**
  - a. Wellness: <https://wellness.utah.edu/>
  - b. Veterans: <https://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>
  - c. Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language: <https://eli.utah.edu/>
  - d. First generation and low-income students: [trio.utah.edu](http://trio.utah.edu)
  - e. Undocumented students: [dream.utah.edu](http://dream.utah.edu)
  - f. Students with children: [childcare.utah.edu](http://childcare.utah.edu)

## Assignments

Lab Assignments	35%	Best 5 (of 6) scores, due Fridays by 11:59pm
Group Replication Analysis	25%	Due March 28 <sup>th</sup> by 11:59pm
Research Note	40%	
Research Proposal	(5%)	Due March 21 <sup>st</sup> by 11:59pm
Draft and Peer Review	(5%)	Due April 18 <sup>th</sup> (draft) and April 23 <sup>rd</sup> (peer review)
Recorded Presentation	(5%)	Due April 30 <sup>th</sup> by 11:59pm
Final Research Note	(25%)	Due April 30 <sup>th</sup> by 11:59pm

**Attendance.** This course is taught as a combined lecture and lab-based course. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings prior to the corresponding course meeting, and to come prepared with questions. Course content, clarifying information, and instructions for weekly labs will be provided in class. Attendance is not monitored or graded in this course, but students who routinely miss lecture should not expect to succeed.

**Lab Assignments.** Students will be required to complete lab assignments in which they put reading and lecture material into practice. Labs will be made available after Wednesday's lecture. Labs are due the following Friday by 11:59pm. Students' best 5 (of 6) scores will count toward their final grade. Late lab assignments will be accepted until the last day of classes (April 22<sup>nd</sup>). Late assignments will be deducted 0.5 points per 24 hours late.

**Group Replication Analysis.** Students will be sorted into groups to conduct a replication analysis. Students will be provided with a published journal article and a dataset. Each group will have to work together to 1) coordinate logistics on data and code file storage, 2) clean and recode data, 3) troubleshoot replication of an analysis in the paper, and 4) collaborate on the writing of a final replication report, submitted along with replication code. One grade will be assigned to the final report.

**Research Note.** The research note is the final assignment students will complete. Students will develop and specify original research questions, identify a plausible and empirically testable hypothesis (to be tested with quantitative data), find publicly available quantitative data to test the hypothesis, and conduct an original analysis. This final task will proceed in multiple stages, including a research proposal (formal analysis plan), circulating drafts for peer review, and a final write-up stage. Final reports will be your final exam. These should be professionally written and formatted, and will be submitted along with replication code and a 5-minute recorded presentation of your question, hypothesis, analysis, and findings.

## SEMESTER SCHEDULE

**January 6**      **Course Introduction**

**January 8**      **Why Do Methods Matter?**

Howard, chapter 4

**January 13**    **Research Questions and Literature Reviews**

Howard, chapter 1

**January 15 Theories, Hypotheses, and Observable Implications**

Howard, chapter 3

Bartels, "What's the Matter with *What's the Matter with Kansas?*"

**January 20 NO CLASS (MLK Day)**

**January 22 Introduction to Stata**

**January 27 Variables and Sampling**

Agresti, chapter 2

**January 29 Descriptive Statistics**

Agresti, chapter 3

**February 3 Probability Distributions**

Agresti, chapter 4

**February 5 Inference and Statistical Testing**

Agresti, pp. 103-120 and 139-155

**February 10 Group Comparisons and Correlation**

Agresti, pp. 179-193 and 215-225

**February 12 Linear Regression I**

Agresti, chapter 9

**February 17 NO CLASS (President's Day)**

**February 19 Linear Regression II**

Agresti, chapter 10

**February 24 Linear Regression III**

Agresti, pp. 307-331

**February 26 Linear Regression IV**

Agresti, pp. 419-435

**March 3 Logistic Regression I**

Agresti, pp. 459-472

**March 5      Logistic Regression II**

Agresti, pp. 472-480

**March 10      NO CLASS (Spring Break)**

**March 12      NO CLASS (Spring Break)**

**March 17      Small-N Research Design: Case Selection and Selection Bias**

Howard, chapter 5

**March 19      Qualitative Methods I: Field-Based Data Collection**

Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment*, chapter 2

**March 24      Qualitative Methods II: Historical Methods and Process-Tracing**

De Micheli et al., “Tenuous Pacts and Multiparty Coalitions”

**March 26      NO CLASS (Work on Replication Analysis)**

\*\*\* *Replication Analysis due Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup> by 11:59pm*

**March 31      Experimental Methods I: Causality and Randomization**

KKV, pp. 75-87

**April 2      Experimental Methods II: Experimental Designs**

Kuo et al., “Social Exclusion and Political Identity: The Case of Asian American Partisanship”

**April 7      Research Ethics**

Fujii, “Research Ethics 101”

Visit website and read: <https://www.prisonexp.org/the-story>

**April 9-21      NO CLASS (Work on Research Notes)**

Upcoming Deadlines

April 18<sup>th</sup> – Upload draft of research note for peer review

April 23<sup>rd</sup> – Submit peer review of partner’s draft

April 30<sup>th</sup> – Upload recorded, 5-minute presentation of research note to Canvas

April 30<sup>th</sup> – Submit final Research Note report to Canvas