




POLITICAL SCIENCE
PSC 300: INTRO TO ORIGINAL RESEARCH

 Spring 2022	 M/W 2:15-3:35	 Eggers 100A	 Professor Erin Hern
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HOW TO REACH ME

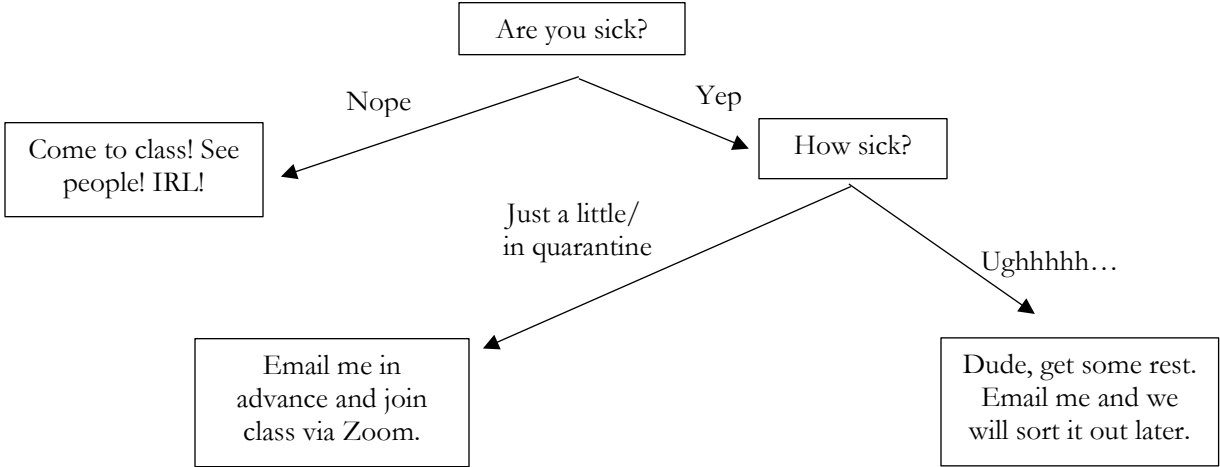
<p><u>In Person: Office Hours</u> M/W, 10-11 AM 400B Eggers Hall</p>	<p><u>Online</u> Email: ehern@syr.edu Zoom: by appointment</p>
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

How should a local government agency figure out the needs of its constituents? Why do Republicans and Democrats watch different sources of news? Are positive or negative campaign ads more effective? Whether your research question is relevant for the non-profit world, government functioning, or academic inquiry, answering these questions requires an understanding of conducting original research: tools for gathering original data from people or primary sources in “the field”—in other words, IRL. This course will take you through practical instruction on best practices in interviews, surveys, ethnography, experiments, and more, culminating in a final research design. While the course draws explicitly on political science literature and methods, it is applicable across the social sciences.

- LEARNING OBJECTIVES**
- How to select and conceptualize a good social science research project involving original data collection.
 - How to conduct five different methods of data collection (ethnography, interviews, surveys, experiments, and archives), including the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.
 - Practical issues of implementing research, including ethics, IRB applications, logistics, and budgeting.
 - How to put together a comprehensive research design and pitch it to possible funders.

HOW TO ATTEND CLASS



COURSE MATERIALS + INFO

(pssst....everything is on Blackboard (BB))

Readings

All readings are listed on the course schedule below and available on BB:
Coursework>Week#>Readings

Zoom Links

On BB:
“Virtual Classroom”

Communicating

If there are any changes to the course schedule or format (for example, if I have to quarantine), I will email you through BB. **Make sure you check your .syr email regularly** and use BB to stay on top of course deadlines.

Lectures

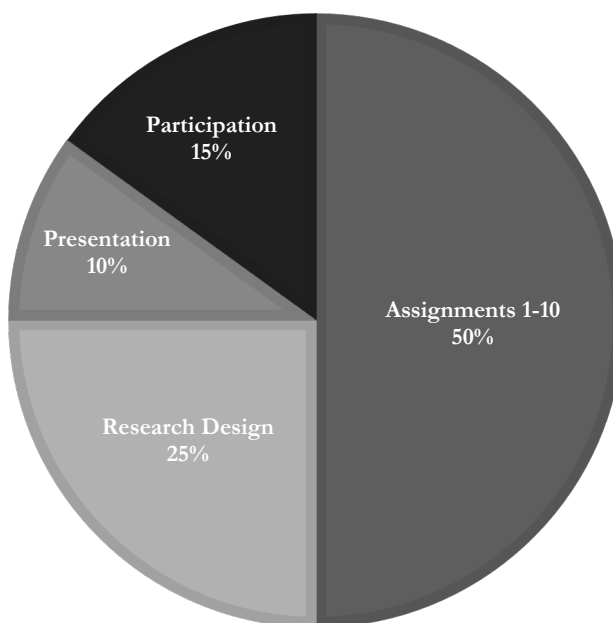
Slides and recordings (where available) are available on BB:
Coursework>Week#>Lecture

Assignments

All assignments are listed on the course schedule below and available on BB:
Coursework>Week#

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Participation:
Made up of attendance and informal writing due before class. Informal writing will prepare you for the class discussions and workshops.



Assignments 1-10:
due weekly, guide you through the practical application of the skills we discuss in class each week. Builds to final research design.

Research Design:
Final product of the class, due at the end of the semester. All assignments build toward it.

Note: further instruction for all of these assignments is available on BB on the assignment links associated with each week. Please ask if you are unsure how or when to complete any of the assignments.

Presentation:
10 minute funding pitch of your research design

A	>93
A-	90-93.9
B+	88-89.9
B	83-87.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	78-79.9
C	73-77.9
C-	70-72.9
D	60-69.9
F	<60

Attendance and Late Work

Attendance—either in-person or virtual—is required and comprises part of your final grade. Absence will be excused in the case of more severe illness or other emergency that requires you miss class, but you must notify me in advance (unless impossible).

Because the assignments in this course are sequential and time-sensitive, I do not accept late work (except in the case of illness or emergency). **It is much better for you to submit an incomplete assignment than nothing at all.** I will accept extension requests for the final research design, but I do not guarantee that they will be granted.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

1/24 M: Course Introduction

1/26 W: Finding a Good Question

Read: Chodorow, Stanley. *Writing A Successful Research Paper: A Simple Approach*. Chapters 3

Write: Begin to brainstorm topic ideas. Start with a general topics and move to narrow, open-ended questions. Bring 3 ideas to class.

Week 2

1/31 M: One-on-One Meetings – Be ready with 2-3 possible topics ready to discuss

2/2 W: Question Workshop

Assignment 1 due 2/6, midnight

Week 3

2/7 M: Explanations and Outcomes

Read: Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel Posner, and Jeremy Weinstein. 2007. “Why Does Ethnicity Undermine Public Goods Provision?” *American Political Science Review* 101(4). Read 709-711.

Write: Briefly describe the different explanations that the authors put forth about the relationship between ethnicity and public goods provision. Note: they call these explanations “families of mechanisms.”

2/9 W: Explanations and Outcomes Workshop

Write: possible outcomes or explanations relevant to your research question. Whether you focus on outcomes (Ys) or explanations (Xs) depends on the format of your question.

Assignment 2 due 2/13, midnight

Week 4

2/14 M: Conceptualizing Variables

Read: Habyarimana et al, pages 712-721

Write: How do the authors measure the following variables: ethnicity, co-ethnicity, egoist, non-egoist, “commonality of taste,” “other-regardingness,” “efficacy”, “findability”, and “social sanctioning”?

2/16 W: Variables Workshop

Write: Identify as many variables as possible in your research question and explanations/outcomes.

Assignment 3 due 2/20, midnight

Week 5

2/21 M: Ethnography and Participant Observation (1)

Read: Boswell et al. 2018. “State of the Field: What can Political Ethnography Tell us About Anti-Politics and Democratic Disaffection?” *European Journal of Political Research* 58: 56-71.

2/23 W: Ethnography and Participant Observation (2)

Read: Scott, James. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 1.

Write: In documenting everyday life in “Sedaka,” what themes does Scott highlight? What do you think he is trying to convey through his descriptions?

Assignment 4 due 2/27, midnight

Week 6

2/28 M: Interviews and Focus Groups (1)

Read: Mosely, Layna. 2013. *Interview Research in Political Science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Chapter 1 (**Focus on pgs 5-8; 12-26**) *Note: this e-book is available through the library and would be very useful in its entirety if you plan to carry out interviews.*

3/2 W: Interviews and Focus Groups (2)

Read: Verwey, Cornel and Michael Quayle. 2012. "Whiteness, Racism, and Afrikaner Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *African Affairs* 111/445: 551-575.

Write: What was the author's sampling strategy? What impact did the authors' personal identities have on the research process? What kind of interviews did they conduct? What was their process for analyzing the interview data?

Assignment 5 due 3/6, midnight

Week 7

3/7 M: Surveys (1)

Read: Fowler, Floyd and Carol Cosenza. 2008. "Writing Effective Questions," in *International Handbook of Survey Methodology*. Routledge.

3/9 W: Surveys (2)

Write: Draft your survey questions.

Assignment 6 due 3/13, midnight

*******SPRING BREAK*******

Week 8

3/21 M: Experiments (1)

Read: Gerber, Alan and Donald Green. 2012. *Field Experiments: Design, Analysis, and Interpretation*. W.W. Norton. Introduction.

Write: Responses to the exercises at the end of the chapter.

3/23 W: Experiments (2)

Read: Habyarimana et al (revisit first parts, read through the end).

Write: Identify any part of your research project that might be possible to explore through an experiment.

Assignment 7 due 3/27, midnight

Week 9

3/28 M: Archives and Primary Sources (1)

Read: Schmidt, Laura. 2016. "Using Archives: A Guide to Effective Research," Society of American Archivists.

3/30 W: Archives and Primary Sources (2)

Write: Compile a list of primary documents that could be useful for your project, using one of the digitized collections we discussed on Tuesday.

Assignment 8 due 4/3, midnight

Week 10

4/4 M: Choosing a strategy

Read: Jensen, Eric and Charles Laurie. 2020. *Doing Real Research: A Practical Guide to Social Research*. Sage publishing. Chapter 1.

4/6 W: One-on-One meetings

Write: Your preliminary thoughts about the method (or combination of methods) you want to use in your research design.

Week 11

4/11 M: Ethical Considerations

Read: Mosely, Layna. 2013. *Interview Research in Political Science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapters 2 (Sarah Brooks) and 3 (Lauren MacLean).

4/13 W: Working with the IRB

Complete: [CITI training through SU. Submit completion certification via Blackboard.](#)

Assignment 9 due 4/17, midnight

Week 12

4/18 M: Logistics and Budgeting

4/20 W: Research Design Workshop

Write: Complete a data collection plan for the “ideal” version of your research. Note any data collection exercises that may need alteration due to Covid-19.

Assignment 10 due 4/24, midnight

Week 13

4/25 M: Giving Good Presentations

4/27 W: Pitch Workshop

Write: Make an outline of the components you will include in your presentation.

Final Presentation Slides due 5/1, midnight

Week 14

5/2 M: Pitches (1)

5/4 W: Pitches (2)

Final Research Designs Due TBD

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Covid-19 Stay Safe Pledge

Syracuse University's Stay Safe Pledge reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on the well-being of our community members. This pledge defines norms for behavior that will promote community health and wellbeing. Classroom expectations include the following: wearing a mask that covers the nose and mouth at all times, maintaining a distance of six feet from others, and staying away from class if you feel unwell. Students who do not follow these norms will not be allowed to continue in face-to-face classes; repeated violations will be treated as violations of the Code of Student Conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Academic Integrity

Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university policy. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first offense by an undergraduate student is course failure, accompanied by a transcript notation indicating that the failure resulted from a violation of Academic Integrity Policy. The standard sanction for a first offense by a graduate student is suspension or expulsion. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>.

Disability Related Accommodations

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498, TDD: (315) 443-1371 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Religious Observances

SU religious observances notification and policy, found at <http://hendricks.syr.edu/spiritual-life/index.html>, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they **notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes** and by the submission deadline for flexibly formatted classes. An online notification process is available for students in **My Slice / StudentServices / Enrollment / MyReligiousObservances / Add a Notification**.