
course time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11-11:50am

classroom: RJH 211

lab times: Wednesdays 1-1:50pm, Fridays 11-11:50am, and Fridays 1-1:50pm

office hours: Mondays, 10-10:50am; Wednesdays 3-4pm; and Fridays 10-10:50am

office: Scharbauer 2007F

e-mail: michael.strausz@tcu.edu

response time: I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours during the week, and within 48 hours during weekends and holidays.

Final Exam Date

For non-degree candidates (i.e., everyone except graduating seniors), the final exam will be **Wednesday, May 4 from 11:00am to 1:30pm**. Degree candidates, please see me about scheduling an alternate time.

Course Description

This course has two aims. First, it is my goal for you to become better *consumers* of the work of professional political scientists. You will learn skills including how to evaluate the measurement of concepts, interpret statistical tables, and think critically about both qualitative and quantitative research designs. In short, you will learn to evaluate the strength of factual claims about politics. Second, it is my goal for you to learn to use the tools of empirical inquiry to become *producers* of your own political science research. You will learn to ask good questions, assemble competing explanations, gather data to test those explanations, analyze those data, and draw conclusions. Both of these sets of skills—becoming better consumers and producers of political science research—will help you in your other courses, and they will help you in life beyond college as well.

This is not a statistics class; it is a class about how political scientists do research. Because political scientists often use statistics in their research, we will pay a lot of attention to statistics, but we will also discuss qualitative research techniques, and we will spend time thinking about things like measurement, case selection, and research design, which are important for both quantitative and qualitative research.

Required Texts and Materials

You are also required to have the following text for the duration of the class. Both electronic and hard copies will work, but please make sure to get the 6th edition:

Pollock III, Philip H, and Barry C Edwards. 2019. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 6th Edition. CQ Press.

This class will also be easier if you have access to a laptop computer that you can bring to the labs.

If you do not have access to a computer, and/or if the cost of buying or renting this text is too much for you, please contact me as soon as you can to discuss alternatives.

Course Policies and Requirement

Exams: This class will have midterm exams on **February 21** and **April 4** and a final exam on **Wednesday, May 4**. All of the exams will be a combination of short answer and multiple choice. Given the importance of the concepts we are discussing in this class toward your future political science classes, the second midterm exam and the final exam are cumulative, meaning you will continue to be tested on key concepts throughout the course.

Lab quizzes: Before each lab you will be required to read a chapter in a workbook that I have prepared and then take a short quiz. The quizzes will be on D2L. They will be open book and open notes. They will both cover the content of the chapter as well as concepts that we have discussed in class.

Lab assignments: In each lab, you will have the chance to apply some of concepts that we have gone over in lecture. For many students, this is the most exciting part of the class. You will be learning how to use the software package called “R” to analyze real world data, including surveys of Americans, data on countries, and data on US states. R is an extremely powerful piece of software that you can use to do professional quality data analysis. Unless otherwise noted, each lab assignment will be due by the beginning of your next lab.

In-class reflections: At the end of each class session—lab or lecture—students will have a few minutes to write one to three sentences on one of these questions:

1. What is the most important insight that you got from today’s class?
2. What is something that you learned today?
3. What is the muddiest point for you from today’s class?
4. What is something that we touched on today that you want to learn more about?

If students miss a class, they should log in to D2L before the next class to give a brief explanation of why they missed class. These explanations might include “I was sick,” “my sister got married,” “I was having some family issues,” etc. I respect your privacy, so I do not need details in your explanations (no need to tell me about what kind of illness or doctor’s appointment, for example).

For each day that a student fills out a genuine reflection on the class or explanation for why he or she missed class, that student will get full credit (a 100). Failure to complete a day’s prompt will result in a grade of 0 for that day.

Homework: I will occasionally assign short exercises to complete at home or in class. The grades that you earn on these will be averaged together into your homework grade.

Reading: I expect students to read assigned materials before coming to class and lab (see the course schedule beginning on page five of this document for readings).

Reading the assigned materials will set you up to get more out of lectures and labs. Timely and careful completion of the assigned reading will help you with your performance on the exams, on the lab quizzes, and on the labs.

Grading

Assignments, Exams/Quizzes, Presentations, etc.	Percentage
First exam	15%
Second exam	20%
Final exam	25%
Lab workbook quizzes	5%
Lab assignments (Labs 1-9 are each worth 2% of your final grade and lab 10 is worth 6% of your final grade)	24%
Homework assignments	5%
In-class reflections	6%

Grades are determined on a 100-point scale as follows:

A: 93.5 and above	B: 82.5-86.4	C: 72.5-76.4	D: 62.5-66.4
A-: 89.5-93.4	B-: 79.5-82.4	C-: 69.5-72.4	D-: 59.5-62.4
B+: 86.5-89.4	C+: 76.5-79.4	D+: 66.5-69.4	F: 59.4 and below

If you feel that you have been graded unfairly on any course assignment, please wait 24 hours after the assignment is returned and then contact me with a typed statement about why you believe you were graded unfairly. This statement must provide substantive reasons why you believe that you were graded unfairly. The appeal process must be started one week after the material was returned.

Late Work

In general, I do not accept late quizzes, homework assignments, or exams. I accept late lab assignments, but with a 10-point penalty (out of 100) per 24 hours late. However, if you miss or are late in submitting any assignment because of an Official University Absence, an illness, or a personal or family emergency, please communicate with me as soon as you can we can discuss rescheduling your work.

Office Hours

I encourage students to take advantage of my office hours in order to ask questions about the course materials or to chat about issues related to the course or political science more generally. While you are free to drop by without an appointment, if you want to make sure that I will be available right when you drop by, please feel free to sign up for an appointment here: <https://calendly.com/michael-strausz/15min>. For now, my plan is to hold office hours in person. However, it is fine if you would prefer to meet over Zoom instead. Just let me know and I will send you a link. If the COVID situation changes, or if I am not able to hold in-person office hours at any point, I will email the

class and temporarily move to Zoom. If you have classes or other obligations during my office hours and would like to meet with me, please email me to make an appointment.

Technology Policy

Students wishing to use computers, tablets, or smartphones to take notes in class are requested to use those devices only for class related purposes. I know how tempting it can be to use an electronic device for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Ravelry (the knitting social networking site), Instagram, TikTok, games, and other fun distractions, but if I catch a student doing so, that student will no longer be permitted to bring his or her electronic device to class. Remember that your primary responsibility at TCU is to learn. If you don't trust yourself to avoid online distractions, I encourage you to take notes with a pen or pencil. If I catch you using an electronic device for non-class related purposes during class, you will lose permission to use that device in class for the rest of the semester. Students wishing to make audio or video recordings of classes are required to see me to discuss acceptable use of those recordings and to sign a contract indicating that you will use those recordings responsibly. In the absence of written permission, you are not permitted to make audio or video recordings of classes.

E-mail Policy

Course-related communications will be sent to your TCU email account. Thus, check your TCU email regularly. "I did not see the email that you sent me" is not an acceptable excuse for failing to complete required course tasks. Also, feel free to email me questions, comments, or suggestions. In general (i.e. unless there are extraordinary circumstances), I will respond to student emails within 24 hours during the week or 48 hours on weekends and holidays.

Extra Credit

If I decide to establish extra credit opportunities, the specifics will be announced in class or emailed out to all students enrolled in the class. So, come to class and check your TCU email regularly.

TCU Policies

Student Access and Accommodation

Texas Christian University affords students with disabilities reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To be eligible for disability-related academic accommodations, students are required to register with the TCU Office of Student Access and Accommodation and have their requested accommodations evaluated. If approved for accommodations, students are required to discuss their official TCU Notification of Accommodation with their instructors. Accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement. The Office of Student Access and Accommodation is located in The Harrison, Suite 1200. More information on how to apply for accommodations can be found at <https://www.tcu.edu/access-accommodation/> or by calling Student Access and Accommodation at (817) 257-6567.

Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the TCU Code of Student Conduct): Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are also listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog and the Graduate Catalog.

Other University Policies

You can find information about other university policies on the document called “Strausz 20093 Syllabus sp2022 appendix,” which is available on this course’s D2L page. The policies described on that document include Campus Life and the Student Experience, Health and Wellness (including how to tell TCU if you got the COVID vaccine and/or if you are feeling unwell), Face Masks, University policies relating to sharing course materials, support for students on campus, Anti-discrimination and Title IX information, Confidential On-Campus Resources, TCU's TCU Policy for Religious Observations & Holidays, information about audio recording of classes, and Emergency Response Information.

If you cannot find that document, or if you have questions about any of the information on it, please let me know!

Schedule:

Date	Assigned reading and other materials
10-Jan	<i>Welcome</i> No assigned reading
12-Jan	<i>What is political science?</i> No assigned reading
12-Jan & 14-Jan	LAB CANCELLED
17-Jan	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY HOLIDAY
19-Jan	<i>Definition and measurement of concepts</i> Textbook, pp. 1-27 (Chapter 1)
19-Jan & 21-Jan	<i>Lab 1: Getting started with R</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 1 and take the chapter 1 lab quiz
24-Jan	<i>Describing variables</i> Textbook, pp. 34-66 (Chapter 2)

Date	Assigned reading and other materials
26-Jan	<i>Theories and explanations</i> Textbook, pp. 72-80 (Chapter 3 through "Causal Mechanisms" heading)
26-Jan & 28-Jan	<i>Lab 2: Welcome to the tidyverse</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 2 and take the chapter 2 lab quiz
31-Jan	<i>Meet your career services consultant</i> No assigned reading. Guest lecturer: Emmanuel Garcia, Center for Career and Professional Development.
2-Feb	<i>Causal mechanisms and hypotheses</i> Textbook, pp. 80-85 (Chapter 3 through "Making Comparisons" heading)
2-Feb & 4-Feb	<i>Lab 3: Describing and graphing variables</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 3 and take the chapter 3 lab quiz: NOTE: FRIDAY LABS CANCELLED; WILL MEET NEXT WEEK
7-Feb	<i>Comparing means and comparing proportions</i> Textbook, pp. 85-98 (Finish Chapter 3)
9-Feb	<i>Experiments, causation, and internal validity</i> Textbook, pp. 105-114 (Chapter 4 through "Selecting Cases for Analysis" heading)
9-Feb & 11-Feb	<i>Lab 3: Describing and graphing variables</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 3 and take the chapter 3 lab quiz NOTE: WEDNESDAYS LABS NOT REQUIRED TO MEET
14-Feb	<i>Case selection</i> Textbook, pp. 115-123 (Chapter 4 through "Conducting Research Ethically" heading)
16-Feb	<i>Ethics in research</i> Textbook, pp. 123-127 (Finish Chapter 4)
16-Feb & 18-Feb	<i>Lab 4: Recoding and comparing values of variables</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 4 and take the chapter 4 lab quiz

Date	Assigned reading and other materials
21-Feb	First exam No assigned reading
23-Feb	<i>Comparison and control</i> Textbook, pp. 134-161 (Chapter 5)
23-Feb & 25-Feb	<i>Lab 5: Making controlled comparisons</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 5 and take the chapter 5 lab quiz
28-Feb	<i>Basics of statistical inference, part 1</i> Textbook, pp. 167-177 (Chapter 6 through "Quantifying Standard Errors" heading)
2-Mar	<i>Basics of statistical inference, part 2</i> Textbook, pp. 177-195 (Finish Chapter 6)
4-Mar	<i>Lab 6: Making inferences from sample means</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 6 and take the chapter 6 lab quiz
7-Mar—11- Mar	SPRING BREAK
14-Mar	<i>It is pronounced "kai square"</i> Textbook, pp. 215-222 (Chapter 7; "The Chi-Square Test" heading until "Measures of Association" heading)
16-Mar	<i>Tests of significance and measures of association</i> Textbook, pp. 222-234 (Finish Chapter 7)
16-Mar & 18-Mar	<i>Lab 7: Chi-squared</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 7 and take the chapter 7 lab quiz
21-Mar	<i>Overview of qualitative research in political science</i> No assigned reading
23-Mar	<i>Library resources for political science majors</i> No assigned reading
23-Mar & 25-Mar	LAB CANCELLED
28-Mar	<i>Correlation</i>

Date	Assigned reading and other materials
	Textbook, pp. 239-244 (Chapter 8 through "Bivariate Regression" heading)
30-Mar	<i>Bivariate regression</i> Textbook, pp. 244-257 (Chapter 8 through "Multiple Regression" heading)
30-Mar & 1-Apr	<i>Lab 8: Pearson's r and linear regression</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 8 and take the chapter 8 lab quiz
4-Apr	Second exam No assigned reading
6-Apr	<i>Multiple regression</i> Textbook, pp. 257-272 (Finish Chapter 8)
6-Apr & 8-Apr	<i>Lab 9: Multiple regression</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 9 and take the chapter 9 lab quiz
11-Apr	<i>Bivariate logistic regression</i> Textbook, pp. 279-297 (Chapter 9 through "Logistic Regression with Multiple Independent Variables" heading)
13-Apr	<i>Multiple logistic regression</i> Textbook, pp. 297-306 (Finish Chapter 9)
15-Apr	GOOD FRIDAY HOLIDAY
18-Apr	<i>Reading contemporary political science research</i> Assigned reading to be announced
20-Apr	<i>Thinking through the final lab</i> No assigned reading
20-Apr & 22-Apr	<i>Lab 10: Your own empirical analysis</i> Before lab, download and read R workbook chapter 10 and take the chapter 10 lab quiz
25-Apr	<i>The politics of data and the need for qualitative research</i> No assigned reading
27-Apr	<i>Class conclusion and review for final exam</i> No assigned reading

Date Assigned reading and other materials

4-May **Final exam from 11:00am-1:30pm** (graduating seniors should contact Dr. Strausz about scheduling an earlier exam time)