

Seton Hall University

eRepository @ Seton Hall

Diplomacy Syllabi

School of Diplomacy and International
Relations

Fall 2018

DIPL 6310 NB Research Methods for Policy Analysis

Binneh S. Minteh PhD
Seton Hall University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.shu.edu/diplomacy-syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Minteh, Binneh S. PhD, "DIPL 6310 NB Research Methods for Policy Analysis" (2018). *Diplomacy Syllabi*.
200.

<https://scholarship.shu.edu/diplomacy-syllabi/200>

DIPL 6310 NB- Fall 2018

Research Methods for Policy Analysis

Instructor: Dr. Binneh s Minteh
Office: R107
E-mail: binneh.minteh@shu.edu
Phone: (862) 235-7055

Class: Thursday 7:35pm
Office Hours: Thursday 5.30pm - 7.00pm
Classroom: ST 120

Course Description

The objectives of this class are twofold. The first goal is to develop a critical understanding of the use of scientific research in the practice and academic study of international affairs. While we will consider issues central to all research and some unique to qualitative analysis, the emphasis in this class is quantitative research. Whether you are primarily interested in security, finance, development, trade, or social issues, much research that is likely of interest to you uses some form of quantitative analysis. This is equally true for policy reports published by the UN, World Bank, Brookings, RAND, or other relevant organizations. In order to be a productive participant in the world of international affairs, you need to be able to understand the assumptions that underlie quantitative analyses, to disentangle proper and improper uses of quantitative evidence, and to ask intelligent questions about the validity of quantitative measurement and statistical methods.

A second goal of the class is to equip you with the basic skills to actually perform quantitative analyses using a statistical software package (SPSS in this case). These skills include being able to find, download, use, and manipulate datasets published on the internet; to produce and interpret basic graphs and tables in an intelligent way; and to execute and evaluate the output of basic statistical models, especially regression analysis. Bear in mind that the emphasis in this class is on the analysis of data and the substantive interpretation of results. Of necessity, some concepts and relationships will be represented mathematically, but the class is not a mathematical statistics class. Those desiring more rigorous mathematical treatments are encouraged to take follow-up courses in statistical theory and econometrics.

Course Objectives/ Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of scientific research in international affairs
- Distinguish the levels of measurements and types of variables
- Calculate and interpret measures of association (e.g., correlation)
- Understand the principles of statistical inference
- Test hypotheses using bivariate and multivariate analytic techniques
- Conduct basic statistical analyses by hand and using computer software
- Undertake their own research and thoughtfully critique others
- Understand the basic skills of performing quantitative analysis
- Interpret basic data from graphs and tables.

Readings and Materials

Required readings are listed below for each class session. Most articles and book chapters will be posted online.

Janet B. Johnson, H.T. Reynolds, and Jason Mycoff. 2016. Political Science Research Methods 8 th Edition. SAGE/CQ Press. ISBN: 9781506307824

We will be using a statistical software package called SPSS. Students may use university computers - equipped with SPSS either in the information commons area of the library on the second floor or at one of the public computer labs. You may want to purchase the software; it is available here: <http://www.onthehub.com/spss/>. Alternatively, there is an open-source statistical package apparently very similar to SPSS. It is called PSPP and is available here: <http://www.gnu.org/software/pspp/> . If you choose to rent, purchase, or download software, I am not responsible for its functionality.

We will also use a free on-line course on Probability and Statistics from the Open Learning Initiative. This is analogous to an interactive reading assignment. It is essential that you complete these modules before class. I will be covering to some extent the lessons from these modules during class and illustrating them using examples but I will not repeat everything. That is: I will assume during lectures that you have completed the modules.

You can learn more about the course and sign up here:

<http://oli.cmu.edu/courses/free-open/statistics-course-details/>

Requirements and Grading

Grading: 500 points

Course Components	Possible Points
Attendance/ Participation	50
Homework Assignments	150
Mid-Term Exam	100
Research Design Paper	200

Letter Grade
As = $\geq 90\%$
Bs = $\geq 80\%$
Cs = $\geq 70\%$
Ds = $\geq 60\%$

Attendance and Participation

Active and informed participation in class discussion and activities is extremely important. The grade for participation includes the grade for in-class quizzes and debates. Students will be assigned discussion groups at the beginning of the semester. At the end of the semester, students will rate the other members of their discussion group on the quality of their participation and this will be factored into the grade.

Also, students may not use their laptop or other electronic device during active class time (this does not include any mid-class breaks).

Homework Assignments

There will be six homework assignments addressing the following topics:

- Research Design Problem Statement (20)
- Variable Operationalization (20)
- Review of Literature
- Sampling and Inference
- Testing hypothesis -Tests and Crosstabs (20)
- Regression Analysis (20)

Homework Assignments 1 and 2 are already provided for students in advance. Homework assignments 3- 6 will be provided for students as the semester progresses and one week before the due dates

Homework #1: Problem Statement and Hypothesis Assignment (20 Points)

Due at the start of class on September 20th, 2018

In a minimum of three double spaced typed pages with standard margins and fonts (12 point), develop a question that you would like to research. You must do three things:

- Make your question and hypothesis very clear
- Address why your question is theoretically important
- Address how your question and hypothesis is important for policymakers

I expect your bibliography to have a minimum of six sources

Homework #2: Variable Operationalization Assignment (20 Points)

Due at the start of class on October 4th 2018

In a minimum of four double spaced typed pages with standard margins and fonts (12 point), address the following:

- Briefly (no more than a paragraph) summarize your research question
- Discuss how other scholars have operationalized the dependent variable that forms the basis of your study.
- Discuss how you will operationalize the dependent variable in your study (concept, measure, and source).

I expect your bibliography to have a minimum of eight sources.

Homework #3: Literature Review (20 Points)

Due at the start of class on October 11th, 2018

Homework # 4: Sampling and Inference (30 Points)

Due at the start of class on October 25, 2018

Homework # 5: Testing Hypothesis (30 Points)

Due at Start of Class on October 25, 2018

Homework # 6: Regression Analysis (30 Points)

Due at start of class on December 6, 2018

Mid-Term Exam -

Mid-examination will be taken in class on **October 11, 2018**. Students will be required to answer **multiple choice, true or false and short answer questions**. The exam is designed to test students' knowledge of material covered in the first half of the course.

Research Design Paper:

The primary written assignment in this class is a 15 page minimum (double-spaced with 1" margins and 12 point fonts) research design. This paper is due electronically at 12 noon EST on **December 15, 2018**. In this paper you will do the following:

- Develop an international relations research question
- Locate this question in the context of relevant literature (i.e. discuss the importance of the question both for theory and policy)
- Review the relevant literature on this topic
- Outline a strategy for answering this question addressing the following
 - ✓ Operationalize the dependent variable (or what's being caused)
 - ✓ Develop a series of alternative explanations for the outcome
 - ✓ Operationalize independent variables (or what's doing the causing)
 - ✓ Discuss case selection (what cases are you going to look at and why)
 - ✓ Develop a testing procedure (or, how you will test your arguments, and how you will know you are right)
- ✓ Offer a respectable bibliography comprised of academic research.

You are welcome to pick any topic you wish, so long as it is an international relations topic. If you wish to build on one of the examples, please discuss this with me. Changes in topics must be discussed with me in advance

Policy on Incompletes

Incompletes will be given only in exceptional cases for emergencies. Students wishing to request a grade of Incomplete must provide documentation to support the request accompanied by a Course Adjustment Form (available from the Diplomacy Main Office) to the professor before the date of the final examination. If the incomplete request is approved, the professor reserves the right to specify the new submission date for all missing coursework. Students who fail to submit the missing course work within this time period will receive a failing grade for all missing coursework and a final grade based on all coursework assigned. Any Incomplete not resolved within one calendar year of receiving the Incomplete or by the time of graduation (whichever comes first) automatically becomes an "FI" (which is equivalent to an F). It is the responsibility of the student to make sure they have completed all course requirements within the timeframe allotted. Please be aware that Incompletes on your transcript will impact financial aid and academic standing.

Communications Policy

The primary mode of communication between students and instructor is by email and by phone. I will endeavor to respond to email within 48 hours, but usually I will be able to do so within 24 hours. You can also reach me by phone.

Accommodations Policy

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, students at Seton Hall University with disability may be eligible for accommodations in this course. Should a student require such accommodation, he or she must self-identify at the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 67, Duffy Hall, provide documentation of said disability, and work with DSS to develop a plan for accommodations. The contact person is Ms. Diane Delorenzo at (973) 313-6003.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See University and School standards for academic conduct here:

<http://www13.shu.edu/offices/student-life/community-standards/upload/Seton-Hall-University-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

<http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>

It is the policy and practice of Seton Hall University to promote inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Please note, students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-

identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at (973) 313-6003 or by e-mail at DSS@shu.edu.

Course Schedule

Many readings will be posted electronically. If you are unable to access a reading, please contact me in adequate time before the class session in which the reading is due. This schedule of readings may be changed with appropriate notice.

Week	Date	Topics and Assignment Deadlines
1	08/30/2018	Course Overview
		Introductions
2	09/06/2018	The Empirical Approach to Political Science • Scientific Method / How to Ask Questions
		JRM: Chapter 1, pages 1-14, 22-25, 40-44 and Chapter 2.
3	09/13/2018	Beginning The Research Process • Research Design Fundamentals
		• Stephen M. Walt. 1988. Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia. <i>International Organization</i> 42(2): 275-277 ONLY . • Martin S. Edwards, Kevin M. Scott, Susan Hannah Allen and Kate Irvin. 2008. Sins of Commission? Understanding Membership Patterns on the UN Human Rights Commission. <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> 61(3): 390-393 ONLY
4	09/20/2018	The Building Blocks of Social Science Research • Concepts and Variables
		• JRM: Chapter 4, pages 121-126 and Chapter 5, pages 128-145. • Martha Finnemore. 1993. International Organizations as Teachers of Norms. <i>International Organization</i> 47: 565-576 ONLY

5	09/27/2018	Case Selection
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JRM: Chapter 6, pages 166-171 and 195-203 • Barbara Geddes. 1990. How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics. <i>Political Analysis</i> 2:131-150. • Ronald Mitchell. 1994. Regime Design Matters. <i>International Organization</i> 48(3):425-435 ONLY.
6	10/04/2018	Building Qualitative Research Design
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David M. Edelstein. 2004. Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed or Fail. <i>International Security</i> 29(1):49-91. • Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman. 2007. Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield. <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 40(2):170-195.
7	10/11/2018	Sampling and Inference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JRM: Chapter 7 and Chapter 11, pages 348-368
8	10/18/2018	T- Test and Cross Tabs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •JRM: Chapter 12 and Chapter 13, pages 412-449. •Roy Licklider. 1995. The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993. <i>American Political Science Review</i> 89(3):681-690.
9	10/25/2018	Correlation and Regression
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •JRM: Chapter 13, pages 492-496, 478-492, 496-513.
10	11/01/2018	Survey Research and Interviewing
		JRM: Chapter 10
11	11/08/2018	Making Sense of Data
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Multiple Regression I •JRM: Chapter 14, pages 516-559.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Alberto Alesina and Lawrence H. Summers. 1993. Central Bank Independence and Macroeconomic Performance: Some Comparative Evidence. <i>Journal of Money, Credit and Banking</i>. 25(2): 151-162
12	11/15/2018	Statistical Inference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Multiple Regression II
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John A. C. Conybeare. 1983. Tariff Protection in Developed and Developing Countries: A Cross-Sectional and Longitudinal Analysis. <i>International Organization</i>. 37(3):441-467. • Wayne Sandholtz and William Koetzle. 2000. Accounting for Corruption: Economic Structure, Democracy, and Trade. <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>. 44(1):31-50.
13	11/22/2018	Thanks Giving Recess- No Class
14	11/29/2018	Investigating Relationships Between Two Variables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Measures of Association and Regression Analysis
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •JRM: Chapter 13, pages 492-496, 478-492, 496-513.
15	12/06/2018	Multivariate Analysis/ Class Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JRM: Chapter 14, pages 516-559.