Fall 2015

Investigating International Relations

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Seton Hall University

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DIPL 3800: Investigating International Relations

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Office Hours: M-W 12:30-2

Course Objectives
This class is intended to accomplish two goals. First, this is a class for you to develop tools to pose empirical questions and answer them in a social scientific fashion. Second, as this class is an essential prerequisite to DIPL 4101, you will finish this class having developed a template for your senior project.

To accomplish this first goal, we will spend the bulk of class time on understanding both qualitative and quantitative research. The second goal is one of application – you will use insights picked up throughout the class to produce a research design of your own for use in DIPL 4101.

It is worth stressing that this class will be daunting. We will work at a pace faster than other sections, and we will cover more material. Graduate students often find this material a challenge. This is not because the material is impossible – but rather because it involves thinking in unaccustomed ways. The second part of the course also involves a great deal of math, which many of us were taught to avoid.

Course Materials
The textbook that we will use for this course is the following:


Copies of this textbook will be available in the Walsh Library both for checkout and on reserve. Ms. Susan Malcolm in the Diplomacy office also has a copy of this text for checkout.

An additional set of readings will be available on Blackboard.

In addition, we will be using SPSS, which is a standard statistics package. Please be advised that you will need to have the latest version of SPSS installed on your PCs. This can be done at the PC Support office in the Corrigan Hall basement.

Evaluation
Your grade will be comprised of the following. More information on each of these is available on the last page of the syllabus.

Homework Assignments (6 total - 2@ 5% each; 4 @ 10% each)  
Research Design (50% of grade)

Other Course Policies
Late work: Late work will be penalized with a deduction of one letter grade per day.
Academic Integrity: Cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to procedures outlined in the Diplomacy School Academic Integrity Policy. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and will result in a 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://www.shu.edu/offices/student-life/community-standards/community-standards.cfm
http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm.

Participation: Students are expected to be actively involved in learning in this class. I will rely heavily on in-class discussion and will employ the Socratic method from time to time as a means of drawing out discussion.

Accommodation: Students with disabilities should contact Disabilities Support Services for special accommodations. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, students at Seton Hall University who have a 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.

Note on library issues: Successful completion of the research design will require you to use considerable library research. Please note the following: 1) Wikipedia is not acceptable as a valid source of information and as such should not be cited; 2) I will not assign Chapter 3 of the Johnson text (which deals with writing a literature review) but you will find this helpful. 3) If you have further library questions, you should discuss them with Diplomacy’s library liaison, Lisa DeLuca (lisa.deluca@shu.edu).

Schedule of Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>Scientific Method / How to Ask Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2</td>
<td>JR: Chapter 1, pages 1-5, 14-17, 27-29 and Chapter 2.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week Two</th>
<th>Research Design Fundamentals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>LABOR DAY – NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 9</td>
<td>JR: Chapter 3, pages 74-81.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week Three</th>
<th>More Fundamentals/Concepts and Variables</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>JR: Chapter 4, pages 102-119, and the following:</td>
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</tbody>
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**September 16**
JR: Chapter 4, pages 119-124 and Chapter 5, pages 127-144.

**Week Four**
**September 21**
*Concepts and Variables*


**September 23**

**Week Five**
**September 28**
*Case Selection*
JR: Chapter 6, pages 165-170 and 194-204.


**September 30**

**Week Six**
**October 5**
*Building Qualitative Research Designs / Descriptive Statistics*


**October 7**
Intro to SPSS. Bring your computers to class!

**Week Seven**
**October 12**
*Sampling and Inference*
FALL BREAK – NO CLASS

**October 14**
JR: Chapter 11, pages 354-376.
Week Eight  
October 19  
Sampling and Inference / T-tests  
JR: Chapter 7

October 21  
JR: Chapter 12.

Week Nine  
October 26  
Crosstabs and Correlation  
JR: Chapter 13, pages 428-463.


October 28  
OPEN DATE: Sign up for individual meetings with me.

Week Ten  
November 2  
OPEN DATE: Sign up for individual meetings with me.

November 4  
OPEN DATE: Sign up for individual meetings with me.

Week Eleven  
November 9  
Correlation and Regression  
JR: Chapter 13, pages 463-521.

November 11  

Week Twelve  
November 16  
Multiple Regression 1  
JR: Chapter 14, pages 527-568.

November 18  

Week Thirteen  
November 23  
Multiple Regression 2  

November 25  
Thanksgiving - NO CLASS

Week Fourteen  
November 30  
Regression Applications  
NO CLASS

December 2  

Week Fourteen  
December 7  
Logistic Regression Models  
JR: Chapter 14, pages 568-590.

December 9  
JR: Chapter 14, pages 568-590.
December 14


**Particulars on Assignments**

**Homework Assignments**
There will be six homework assignments addressing the following topics:
- Research Design Problem Statement (5%)
- Variable Operationalization (5%)
- T-Tests and Crosstabs (10%)
- Correlation (10%)
- Multiple Regression (10%)
- Logistic Regression (10%)

**Homework #1: Problem Statement Assignment:**
**Due at the start of class on Monday September 21.**
In a minimum of one double spaced typed page with standard margins and fonts (1”, 12 point), develop a question that you would like to research. You must do three things:
- Make certain that it is clear what your question is
- Address why your question is *theoretically* important
- Address why your question why is important for *policymakers*

**Homework #2: Variable Operationalization Assignment:**
**Due at the start of class on Wednesday October 7.**
In a minimum of three double spaced typed pages with standard margins and fonts (1”, 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.

**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 Thursday December 17th.** 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)
- 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 in advance. Changes in topics must be discussed with me in advance.