

University of West Georgia

Fall 2018

Political Science Methods

POLS 2601 – 01

Meets: TR 09:30 am–10:45 pm in Library Main Floor Classroom

FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. J. Salvador Peralta

(Instructor of Record)

Office: Pafford 323

Office Hrs.: MW 1-3pm

& TTh 2-3pm

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Professor Craig Schroer

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Professor Anne Barnhart

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Additional office hours for all are available by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students are introduced to various quantitative and qualitative research methods used in the social sciences, especially Political Science. They learn how to find, evaluate, and ethically use appropriate information to conduct political science research. They construct research questions and write research papers using case studies, comparative methods, and statistics.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed to conduct research by developing a clear and appropriately narrow research focus that is in accordance with the requirements of the assignments.
- Student will identify, distinguish among, and locate a variety of types of sources relevant to political science research; and will accurately identify the main ideas and arguments in the texts they have selected for use in their research projects, evaluating them for reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, point of view or bias, and restate them in their own words.
- Student will create and carry out a formal research design that is: consistent with generally recognized standards in political science, and effectively integrate specific information from the materials they have located.
- Student will cite sources correctly using the APSA format.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES: Common Language for Course Syllabi

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Texts

Required readings will be available online through the library's databases (JSTOR, etc.), or the course website in CourseDen.

Exams

There will be no exams for this class, but there will be other assessments.

Attendance

You cannot participate, contribute, and learn if you are not in class. Therefore, attendance is a requirement of this course. Students are allowed 4 absences. **Students who miss more than 4 lectures will incur a penalty worth 10% of their Final Grade or the equivalent of a letter grade.** Please be aware that I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.

Participation

The structure of weekly class sessions will include a mixture of lectures, discussions, individual and small group activities, and library research labs. So please come to class prepared and ready to participate in whatever activities are planned for the session. Participation entails attending class, joining in-class debates, being prepared with questions and comments about the readings, and completing in-class activities.

Research Project

You are required to develop two research projects for this course. To ease anxiety over completion of these two requirements each is divided into 5 steps, as outlined below.

Table 1. Grade Calculation and Assignment Due Dates

Requirement	Page Count	Due Date	Point Value
1st half of class (before Spring Break)			
Annotated Bibliography Draft 1		Tue., Sep. 04	100
Annotated Bibliography 1		Tue., Sep. 11	100
Literature Review Draft 1		Tue., Sep. 25	100
Literature Review 1		Tue., Oct. 02	100
Research Design 1 (to be completed in class)		Tue., Oct. 02	100
Last day to withdraw		Mon., Oct. 08	
2nd half of class (after Spring Break)			
Annotated Bibliography Draft 2		Tue., Oct. 16	100
Annotated Bibliography 2		Tue., Oct. 23	100
Literature Review Draft 2		Tue., Nov. 06	100
Literature Review 2		Thur., Nov. 13	100
Research Design 2 (to be completed in class)		Thur., Nov. 24	100
Reminder: Missing 4 classes will reduce your grade by 10% (i.e., 1 letter grade)			

Please note that **NO curves** or adjustment of scores will be made. Extra credit will be awarded for attendance to special events such as lectures, films, or extra writing assignments. Additional information about the assignments will be discussed as the semester progresses.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

1. Since we will deal with controversial issues, and since it is vital to the success of this class to maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect, personal attacks will not be tolerated.
2. Please arrive on time. We will take attendance at the beginning of class.

COMMUNICATION

Email

All e-mail communication will proceed through my official UWG email: jperalta@westga.edu

Response Time and Netiquette

We will adhere to the following protocols: (1) If you ask me direct questions e-mail, I will generally reply within two working days or 24-48 hours (weekend and holidays are not working days).

(2) Communicating in an online environment requires special consideration and care, so please abide by basic Internet etiquette or [netiquette](#) when communicating online. For example, e-mails must be properly addressed, include a relevant subject heading, and use appropriate language, tone, and grammar: avoid using acronyms (text message abbreviations); please do not shout (i.e. write using ALL CAPS or large fonts).

DISCLAIMERS

No student can claim any rights based upon any omission, ambiguity, vagueness, or incompleteness contained in this syllabus. The instructor retains the right to amend this syllabus without prior notice.

Fair Use:

All "Website" content and "Course Materials" for this course are intended for the sole use of the enrolled members only; for the purposes associated with it; and may not be retained, altered, shared, or further disseminated without explicit authorization from the copyright holder.

Note on faculty roles and responsibilities: Dr. Peralta is the instructor of record. Professors Barnhart and Schroer are resident experts on information literacy. All three of them attend every session, as the course requires a coherent blend of information literacy and political science methodology to accomplish the learning objectives for the course.

CALENDAR OF ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:

Tuesday	Thursday
	8/16
8/21	8/23
8/28	8/30
9/4 Annotated Bibliography 1 (draft due)	9/6
9/11 Annotated Bibliography 1 (final version due)	9/13
9/18	9/20
9/25 Literature Review (draft due)	9/27
10/2 Literature Review (final version due) Research Design 1 (to be completed in class)	10/4 (No Class - fall break)
10/9 <u>(10/8 LAST DATE TO WITHDRAW)</u>	10/11
10/16 Annotated Bibliography 2 (draft due)	10/18
10/23 Annotated Bibliography 2 (final version due)	10/25
10/30	11/1
11/6 Literature Review 2 (draft due)	11/8
11/13 Literature Review 2 (final version due)	11/15
11/20 (No Class - Thanksgiving)	11/22 (No Class - Thanksgiving)
11/27	11/29
12/4 Research Design 2 (draft due)	12/6
No class - finals	12/13 Research Design 2 (final version due)