

Syllabus Day (i.e. Welcome)

POSC 3410 – Quantitative Methods in Political Science

Steven V. Miller

Department of Political Science



Goal for Today

Familiarize students with the topic of the course and the instructor's expectations.

Course Objectives

1. Understand concepts and how we operationalize abstract concepts for the sake of testing.
2. Delineate variables among various types, like nominal, ordinal and interval.
3. Put together a formal research design to address questions of interest in the study of politics.
4. Express why the logic of control is vital to any good research design.
5. Understand important elements of data, like central tendency and spread.
6. Become familiar with advanced topics like non-normal responses, Bayesian thinking, and post-estimation simulation.
7. Learn the R programming language, which should be a major addition to a résumé.

(Recommended) Books

Kellstedt, Paul M. and Guy D. Whitten (2013). *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. 2nd. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Pollock, Philip H. (2016). *The Essentials of Political Analysis*. 5th. Washington DC: CQ Press.

Grading Policy

Assignment	(Due) Date	Percent of Grade
Participation	N/A	15%
Homework	Periodically	25%
Midterm	<i>before</i> Feb. 24, 3:15 p.m.	20%
Research Paper	<i>before</i> April 23, 10 a.m.	15%
Final Exam	<i>before</i> May 5, 10:30 a.m.	25%

Check syllabus for more information about the homework and paper requirements.

Attendance/Participation Policy

I'd otherwise go on a big spiel about the importance of attending class, but...

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For this semester:

- Attendance is assumed not required.
- Please make it a point to attend lectures.
- Please make it a point to be active on Canvas (for record-keeping).
- Please make it a point to participate to the best of your abilities.



Paul Musgrave 🍕 🌐

@profmusgrave



pleased to unveil my 2020 teaching strategy: "don't worry about grades, just learn something and please don't die"

5:32 PM · Aug 18, 2020 · [Twitter Web App](#)

January

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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

February

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March

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April

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May

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29	30	31				
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

Class Day
 Exams
 Homework Due
 Paper Due

Notable dates: MLK Day (17 January), Spring Break (21-25 March)

Contact Policy

Email me: `svmille@clemsn.edu`.

- Please *don't* email me at `svmille@g.clemsn.edu`, or through Canvas.
- tl;dr: I'll still get it, but it's more hoops in order to respond.
- Simple email to `svmille@clemsn.edu` works best.

That said, I will use Canvas for classwide emails.

Office Hours

Email me: `svmille@clemsn.edu`. We'll set something up.

- All “office visits” will be done via Zoom.

Late Work/Make-up Policy

I'm otherwise a hard-ass about make-ups and the like, but... ˘(ツ)˘/˘

- Please make it a point to complete tasks on time.
- Please get tested if you do not feel well.
- Please make-up assignments you miss because of extenuating circumstances, as promptly as you can.

Just please put in an honest effort, and try your best.

Required Materials/Skills

- Ownership of (or access to) a computer/word processing program.
- The R programming language (read syllabus for more)
- Knowledge of getting journal articles from university library service.

Disabilities Policy

I'm more than happy to accommodate, but:

- The student has to take the initiative. I can't.
- Do let me know privately after class if I should expect to hear from SAS soon.

My Contact Information

- *Name:* Steve Miller (as in the band)
- *E-mail:* svmille@clemson.edu
- *Website:* posc3410.svmiller.com

Additional Course Materials

I do like making lectures publicly available, though.

- Check course website at posc3410.svmiller.com
- Check my Github repository (just in case): github.com/svmiller/posc3410

I encourage the student to take initiative to keep track of their grade through the semester.

My Expectations

I come off as a bit cruel in my expectations.

- I expect a lot, and I expect a commitment from you.
- Otherwise, why bother? Your job is to become “pro-ready.”

I also expect it to be a bit difficult for you.

- My philosophy: if you 100% understand something the first time you read it, you didn't learn anything.
- Read and re-read if necessary.
- Lectures should help, but they're not sufficient. You need to read.

I take seriously the “science” of political science.

- This may not be intuitive, but I'm also eager to help in-class or office hours.

You Have Homework!

Basically, read these on my website (see course materials):

- A Beginner's Guide to Using R
- Reading a Regression Table: A Guide for Students
- The American Statistical Association's Statement on p -values: Context, Process, and Purpose
- Taking Good Notes
- Dos and Dont's of Writing for Students
- Assorted Tips for Students on Writing Research Papers
- Exam Grading Policy
- Writing a Prospectus
- Prospectus Example
- Research Design Paper Instructions
- Fun with Attendance and Grades (i.e. Students Should Attend Class)
- The Educational Power of Discomfort
- Everybody Writes: A Web Content Approach for Students

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