

INTA 2010: Empirical Methods (Spring 2012)

Instructor:	Dr. Esther Skelley Jordan
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TA:	Devin Page
TA Email:	devin.page@gatech.edu
Class time:	M, W, F, at 11:05 – 11:55 a.m.
Class location:	IC 115
Office Hours:	By appointment and highly encouraged
Office Location:	Clough #457N

Course Description

The study of international affairs can take many forms and employ many methods. The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the methodologies favored by the political science discipline. Indeed, there is no one-size-fits-all method for research. However, if you want your work to be taken seriously, you must conduct it in a methodical and replicable way.

Over the course of the semester, you will learn about the science of studying politics. You will practice developing a quality research design that employs the discipline's state of the art quantitative methods. At the end of the semester, you will present your research design to the class and submit a report of your findings.

The course format will be a combination of lectures, class discussion, and in-class research workshops. In addition to your research essays, you will complete several homework assignments that allow you to practice statistical analysis and will take two exams.

Required Reading

Roselle, Lauren, and Spray, Sharon, *Research and Writing in International Relations*, 2nd Ed., Boston, MA: Longman, 2012.

Pollock, Phillip H., *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 3rd Ed., Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2009.

Yockey, Donald D., *SPSS Demystified: A Step-by-Step Guide to Successful Data Analysis*, 2nd ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010. (Yokey)

Various assigned articles will be posted in the "Resources" section of TSquare. (TSquare)

Software Requirements

SPSS 18.0 Integrated Student Version -- NOTE: You may access the software in the Hab Lab and (with limitations) on the VLab from your own PC or Mac. Some of the shrink-wrapped Yokey books for sale at the bookstores have this software included. Make sure that the software that is included is the 18.0 version or later, before purchase. Mac Snow Leopard is not compatible with early versions.

Class Requirements

Essays and Presentation (45%)

You will write group essays (unless instructor approval is given for an individual research project), and present your findings on the international affairs puzzle of your choice (instructor approval required). There will be four parts: Topic Selection (required but not graded), Research Proposal (10+ pages, 10%), Presentation (5%), and Final Research Report (15+ pages, 30%). It is highly recommended that you meet with me to discuss your research project very early in the semester. You must turn in a STAPLED HARD COPY of each paper at the beginning of the class session in which it is due. Email submissions will not be accepted. Instructions for these assignments will be found on Tsquare in the Resources section.

Homework Assignments and Exams (40%)

There will be two homework assignments. Each will be worth 5% of your grade. These will take up to 12 hours to complete, so plan ahead. Late assignments will not be accepted, except in the event of an officially documented medical emergency or official university excuse. Instructions for these assignments will be found on Tsquare in the Resources section.

There will also be two exams. Each will be worth 15% of your grade. These will include multiple choice, true-false, matching, and short answer questions.

Participation (15%)

Participation will account for 15% of your total grade. Credit will be given based on attendance, as well as the quality and consistency of contributions you make to class discussion. High quality contributions to discussion include prepared and informed comments and questions which demonstrate critical thinking regarding assignments and lectures. You must demonstrate that you have thought critically about each reading assignment. This part of your grade will be awarded subjectively, at the instructor's discretion. The class will also be surveyed to assess participation grades, as a check on the instructor's perspective. This student survey will be used only to improve student participation grades. The anonymous survey will be administered through Survey Monkey.

Make-up Policy

Extensions and make-up exams will only be offered in cases of documented medical emergencies or official university excuses. Students must bring any such case to the instructor's attention as soon as they become aware of it.

**Disability or Health
Related Issues**

Students with a disability or a health related issue who need a class accommodation or are concerned about class performance should **make an appointment to speak with me during the first week of class or as soon as the health concern arises.**

Academic honesty

All coursework must meet the Georgia Tech standards of academic honesty. Each student is responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. See: <http://www.osi.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=46>

Specific instructions regarding collaboration and citations will be provided for each assignment. Deviations from the instructions will be reported to the Dean Of Students.

NOTE: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be announced.

INTA 2010 Empirical Methods (Jordan): Spring 2012 Schedule

Last Updated: 1/16/2012, 11:37 AM

Week	Notes & Major Assignments (always hard copies, stapled)	TOPIC	Pollock Reading	Yockey: Reading & SPSS Practice Problems Other	
1/9/12		Introduction to the Fields and Subfields of International Affairs, Sample Presentation			SPRAY: Part 1, Read; Parts II & III: Skim
1/16/12	Mon: No Class, MLK Day Fri: Meet in Library @Homer Rice Library Classroom (2nd floor East of the Library)	Research Resources; Variables, Research Questions, Hypotheses	3		
1/23/12	Friday: Topic Selection Due	Quantitative v. Qualitative Research Design, Causality, and Data Collection Techniques	Intro, 4		Tsquare: Sampling, Surveys, and Content Analysis
1/30/12		Definitions and Measurement	1, 2		
		<u>PART II: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS</u>			
2/6/12	Monday: Exam 1	Literature Review for Theory Development			TSQUARE: Van Evera
2/13/12	Theory Due for Peer Review Friday: Draft LR of DV due for Peer Review	Writing a Methodology Literature Review and Plan; Peer Review			
2/20/12	Friday: Research Proposal Due	Data Matrices, Missing Data, Descriptive Statistics, Graphs		1, 2, 3	
2/27/12		Inference and Comparison of the Means	6, 7	5, 6, 7	
3/5/12	Monday: SPSS HW 1 Due	Cross-Tabulation, In Class Practice	5	16	
3/12/12		OLS Regression, In Class Practice	8	12, 13, 14	
3/19/12	No Class: Spring Break				
3/26/12	Wednesday: SPSS HW2 Due	Catch-up and Research Workshop			
		<u>PART III: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER</u>			
4/2/12	Monday: No CLass	Review (Wed. HW; Fri. Comprehensive)			
4/9/12	Monday: Exam 2	Research Workshop			
4/16/12		Presentations			
4/23/12		Presentations and Wrap-Up			
4/30/12	Finals week: Final Research Reports due Wed., 05/02, in Dr. Jordan's office by 10:00 a.m.				