Narrative

I am pleased to submit this application for POLI 393: Advanced Political Analysis to qualify for a quantitative reasoning (QR) flag in the Xavier core curriculum. POLI 393 is an existing course in the political science curriculum. No substantial changes will be made to the course, as the course is a political statistics course in which students engage quantitative methods and statistical tests nearly every day.

I have taught the course each Spring for the past five years and expect to continue to teach it. I am the only professor who teaches the course, though others (Anas Malik in particular) have the background needed to teach the course if things change in the future. Although the course is an elective in our department, about one-half of our majors complete the course. I would expect this number to go up in the event that it qualifies for a QR flag. The course is typically made up of juniors and seniors, but I intend to advise students to take the course earlier as it would provide them with additional understanding of the methods used in the discipline and, hopefully, allow them to incorporate basic quantitative analysis into their papers and assignments earlier in their college career.

The course is a great fit for a QR flag because it is a political statistics course. We do a bit of qualitative methods discussion, and discussion about research design more generally (it is a social science elective in the core), but the focus for about three-fourths of the course is on learning basic political statistics. Students learn how to set up (and read) a cross tabulation analysis, how to create and analyze bar charts and line charts, measures of association and measures of significance. By the end, students are able to analyze relationships using Chi Square, Independent Samples T-Tests and Multiple Regression, among others.

We use SPSS statistical software in the course. Students who complete the course are able to collect data, create a database and analyze the data using some of the basic quantitative techniques used in the field. The skills they learn here would be broadly applicable to other social sciences as well.

An example of a topic covered would be a difference of means, independent samples T-Test, which allows students to assess whether the mean difference between two groups on a particular attribute is likely to occur by chance. Students learn the formula first and are then shown how to perform the test using SPSS software. Students’ understanding of the test and what it means is assessed through a homework assignment and a quiz. Later, students are asked a question on the midterm that can only be answered through a T-Test (e.g., do male voters make more than the female voters in the sample?). Similar assessments are used to gauge student learning of other core concepts in the course. Students also have to incorporate quantitative tests into their own research projects, so depending on the nature of the questions they are asking, it is possible that an independent samples T-Test would also appear in the student’s research project.
POLI 393: ADVANCED POLITICAL ANALYSIS
SYLLABUS
MWF 11:00 am – 11:50 am, Spring Semesters, Room TBA

Professor Mack Mariani
E-mail: marianim@xavier.edu
Office Hours: MWF 1:00-3:00 (by appointment)

Office: 710 Schott Hall
Cell: (513) 508-6849
Office Phone: (513) 745-2044

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Knowing how to read, understand, and analyze political relationships using quantitative data is a critical skill for students and practitioners of political science. This course will introduce students to the basic elements of statistical analysis and provide students with the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills needed to apply quantitative methods to political questions. In this course, we will use quantitative methods to address significant questions facing the discipline, including questions related to American politics, comparative politics and international relations. Over the course of the semester, we will also consider how quantitative and qualitative analysis contributes to the development, articulation and assessment of political theories, and the value and limitations of the scientific method in the social sciences. The first half of the course will focus on teaching basic quantitative methods used by political scientists, and training students to construct databases, analyze data, and prepare papers for presentation and/or publication. In the second half of this course, students will also learn the basics of qualitative research and then put their knowledge into practice by gathering, analyzing and incorporating quantitative or qualitative data into their own research projects.

SOCIAL SCIENCE FLAG & QUANTITATIVE REASONING FLAG

This course qualifies as a social science electives course in the core curriculum. As a social science electives course, this course will provide you the opportunity to study human behavior and action in a systematic, rigorous, evidence based, generalizing, objective, and cumulative way. The course will require you to apply the scientific method, using qualitative and quantitative techniques, to study how people behave and act as individuals, in groups, and in society. In this course, you will analyze social issues using scientific research conducted with diverse populations in the United States and the world. You will become better able to describe the role and functions of social institutions, explain human behavior and relationships within complex social systems, and critically analyze social science issues within a larger historical and global context.

This course also qualifies for the Quantitative Reasoning (QR) flag. In this course, as in other courses with the QR flag, you will practice making sense of quantitative information and interpreting this information in the context of the course material. One of the goals of the QR-flagged course is to lead students towards carefully and precisely presenting quantitative information as well as inferences that such information permits, within the broader disciplinary context. A portion of the course will be devoted to your reading, communicating, and reasoning with quantitative information, as such information provides an oft-neglected perspective and can lead to conclusions which otherwise might not have been possible. The insights gained from the quantitative aspects, in concert with other perspectives, will help you form a more rigorous and robust understanding of the broader course topic(s).
COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is part of the Xavier Core Curriculum, which aims to develop people of learning and reflection, integrity and achievement, in solidarity for and with others. It addresses the following core learning objectives at the introductory level:

- Evaluate real-world problems using quantitative methods and arguments (SLO 2b).
- Students recognize and cogently discuss significant questions in the social sciences (LO 1a);
- Students use quantitative data to examine the diverse, complex and interdependent nature of people in the world (LO 5a);
- Students describe and examine the multifaceted character of society and how the inclusion of different perspectives can influence one’s worldview (LO 4a);

This course also serves as an elective course for the political science major and minor. The course meets the following political science learning objectives:

- Students engage key concepts, theoretical frameworks, and analytical methods in American, comparative and/or international politics;
- Students interrogate the assumptions underlying assertions about justice, fairness, security, war, peace, stability, development, conflict, and/or other political ideas and issues; and
- Students relate theoretical knowledge to empirical observations.

OFFICE HOURS AND COMMUNICATION

My office is located at Schott #710. I am available to meet most Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays between 12:00 noon and 3:00 pm. Please talk to me after class, e-mail me or text me to make an appointment. I am always available by cell phone (513-508-6849) or e-mail if you want to discuss something or set up a time outside of my office hours to meet. If you text me, please be sure to include your name at the end of the text. To contact me by e-mail, I prefer that you use my Xavier e-mail (marianim@xavier.edu). Please do not send important or time-sensitive messages on Canvas (though you can free to leave comments there).

BOOKS


The following items should be purchased together in the CQ Bundle (ISBN 978-1-5063-3644-2):

- Philip H. Pollock III, *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis, 5th Edition*
- CQ Press, IBM/SPSS Student Version;
GRADING POLICIES

Your final score in the class will be based on your performance on the following assignments/requirements:

- 20% Essentials Assignments
- 20% Companion Assignments
- 20% Test #1
- 20% Political Analysis Project
- 05% Conference/Presentation
- 15% Final Exam

The following point totals are needed to secure the following grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
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<tr>
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**Essentials/Companion Quantitative Assignments** – Students should expect to complete one to two assignments per week. Assignments should be handed in on paper. If you are not going to be attending class, you may upload your assignment to canvas prior to class in order to avoid the late penalty.

**Project/Applied Political Analysis** – Students will produce a political analysis that incorporates qualitative or quantitative methods. Students may choose to incorporate the analysis into an existing paper or project or conduct preliminary research for a new project. All students are required to present their projects. There are three options for presentation: the Celebration of Student Research and Creativity (sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences), the All Politics is Local Conference at Walsh University, or an in-class presentation during week 17.

**Late Papers and Assignments** – Late papers and assignments will receive a one letter grade penalty (An A becomes a B and so on). Papers and assignments that are more than one week late will receive a two letter grade penalty or more.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic/Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>January 11: Course Syllabus</td>
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<td>January 13: Essentials, Chapter 1: The Definition and Measurement of Concepts</td>
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<td>January 15: Companion, Getting Started &amp; Companion, Chapter 1: Introduction to SPSS</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>January 18: Martin Luther King Day, No Class</td>
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<td>January 20: Essentials, Chapter 2: Measuring and Describing Variables</td>
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<td>January 22: Companion, Chapter 2: Descriptive Statistics</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>January 25: No Class</td>
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<td>January 27: Essentials, Chapter 3: Proposing Explanations, Framing Hypo., Making Comparisons</td>
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<td>January 29: Companion, Chapter 3: Transforming Variables</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>February 1: Review Chapter 3</td>
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<td>February 3: Essentials, Chapter 4: Research Design and the Logic of Control</td>
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<td>February 5: Companion, Chapter 4: Making Comparisons</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>February 8: Review Chapter 4</td>
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<td>Week</td>
<td>Dates</td>
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| 6    | February 10: Essentials, Chapter 5: Making Controlled Comparisons  
February 12: Companion, Chapter 5: Making Controlled Comparisons  |
| 7    | February 15: Review Chapter 5  
February 17: Essentials, Chapter 6: Foundations of Statistical Inference (123-137)  
February 24: Companion, Chapter 6: Making Inferences About Sample Means  
February 26: Essentials, Chapter 7: Tests of Significance & Measures of Association (157-170)  |
| 9    | Spring Break (March 7-11)  |
| 10   | March 2: Companion, Chapter 7: Chi Square and Measures of Association  
March 4: Review  
March 14: Essentials, Chapter 8: Correlation and Linear Regression  
March 16: Essentials, Chapter 8: Correlation and Linear Regression  
March 18: Companion, Chapter 8: Correlation and Linear Regression  |
| 11   | March 14: Essentials, Chapter 8: Correlation and Linear Regression  
March 16: Essentials, Chapter 8: Correlation and Linear Regression  
March 18: Companion, Chapter 8: Correlation and Linear Regression  |
| 12   | March 21: Review  
March 23: Midterm Exam (In-Class, NEW DATE)  
March 25: No Class (Easter Break)  |
| 13   | March 28: No Class (Easter Break)  
March 30: Van Evera, Research Methods (pp 21-40): Read sections on “How can Theories be Made,” “How can Theories be Tested,” and “Strong versus Weak Tests,” and “Helpful Hints for Testing Theories.”  
| 14   | April 4: Research Design Due (Class Discussion about Designs)  
April 8: Easter Break, No class  |
| 15   | April 11: Easter Break, No class  
April 13: Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Ch. 3 (Designing a Qualitative Study)  
April 15: Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Ch. 4 (Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry)  |
| 16   | April 18: Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Ch. 7 (Data Collection)  
April 20: Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Ch. 8 (Data Analysis and Representation).  
April 22: Political Analysis Due  
April 23: All Politics Is Local Conference (Saturday)  |
| 17   | April 25: Presentations  
April 27: Presentations  
April 29: Presentations  |
|      | May 6: Final Exam (10:00 am to 11:50 am)  |
ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Students with Disabilities - Any student in need of accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should notify the course instructor and contact Cassandra Jones in the Learning Assistance Center at 513-745-3280 or e-mail jonesc20@xavier.edu to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Writing Center - The Writing Center offers free one-on-one tutoring on writing assignments for all Xavier students. The Writing Center is located in the Conaton Learning Commons room 400. http://www.xavier.edu/writingcenter/

Learning Assistance Center - The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) provides support services to facilitate learning. The LAC has two main purposes: tutoring and disability services. The tutoring services include subject specific tutoring, drop-in sessions, study skills assistance, and Supplemental Instruction (SI). For students with documented disabilities, services include accommodations such as extended time on exams, reduced distraction testing environment, note-taking assistance, and assistive technology. Services are provided in a positive and encouraging environment, which promotes appreciation for diversity and cura personalis. The LAC is located in the Conaton Learning Commons room 514. The web address is: http://www.xavier.edu/lac/.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Honesty Policy - The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance in assignments and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission and registration documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation. All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student's own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another's efforts is prohibited, as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one's own.

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