

## Research Methods for Political Science A | POU33011

Year	Junior Sophister
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	20 hours of lectures, 10 hours of tutorials
Pre-requisite	POU22040
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Professor Constantine Boussalis
Contact Email	boussalc@tcd.ie

### Module Outline

#### Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Critically analyse existing political science and social science research on the basis of the research methods employed
- Specify appropriate research questions in Political Science and construct effective research design strategies to answer these questions
- Analyse quantitative data to uncover relationships between theoretically relevant variables
- Effectively use statistical methods to conduct political science research
- Effectively employ R, a statistical software package, to conduct political science research

#### Module Learning Aims:

In this module, students study how to conduct their own research. This module introduces the basics of statistics and is the first step in the preparation for the dissertation in POU44000 Year Long Research Project in Political Science and for original research work generally.

#### Module Content:

This module explores a variety of both qualitative and quantitative social science research to develop the skills for explaining casual mechanism in political phenomena. Especially, the class focuses on the logic of scientific inference, research design, and measurement. This module also explores the uses and abuses of statistical reasoning in social and political studies. Students learn the basic rules of data analysis and the logic of statistical inference. It is a prerequisite for Research Methods B, which covers more advanced statistical techniques and research methods.

Students are discouraged from taking Research Methods in Political Science B in the Hilary Term only, as the course material in the second term builds on the issues discussed during the first term. Students who wish to register nonetheless are requested to contact the

lecturer to discuss to what extent their prior training in research methods and basic statistics is sufficient.

## Assessment

Assignments and one research paper: 40% total

1x120 minutes examination 60%

## Recommended Reading List

- Janet Buttolph Johnson, Henry T Reynolds, and Jason D Mycoff. Political science research methods. CQ Press, 2015
- Learning Statistics with R (LSR). 2015. Freely available at: <https://learningstatisticswithr.com/lsr-0.6.pdf>
- Toshkov, D. (2016). Research design in political science. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Manheim, J.B., R.C. Rich, L. Wilmat, C.L. Brians & J. Babb (2012) Empirical Political Analysis: An Introduction to Research Methods. Harlow: Pearson Education. ISBN: 1408204622
- Field, A., Miles, J., & Field, Z. (2012). Discovering statistics using R. Sage publications.
- (Optional) R.S. Witte and J.S. Witte. Statistics. Wiley, 11th edition, 2013.