

POU33011 Research Methods for Political Science A

Module Information

Module Code	POU33011
Module Title	Research Methods for Political Science A
Department	Political Science
Year Group	Junior Sophister
Module Personnel	Constantine Boussalis
Academic Year	2026–27
Credit Weighting	5 credits
Semester	Semester 1 (Michaelmas Term)
Contact Hours	2 lectures per week (1 hour each), plus a weekly tutorial from Week 2

Module Content

Module Description	This module provides a comprehensive introduction to research methods in political science, with a focus on both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It is designed to equip students with the skills necessary to design and conduct rigorous research, critically analyze political phenomena, and apply statistical reasoning. Relying on the logic of scientific inquiry, the module covers research design, measurement, and the use of the statistical software R to interpret and analyze data. By the end of the module, students will be prepared to effectively conduct empirical political science research and draw meaningful conclusions from their findings.
Module Learning Aims	To introduce the logic of scientific inquiry underpinning empirical political science, and to develop students' ability to design rigorous research, analyze quantitative data, and use the R statistical software to test hypotheses about political phenomena.
Learning Outcomes	• Critically analyze existing political science and social science research on the basis of the research methods employed. • Specify appropriate research questions in political

Module Content

	science and construct effective research design strategies to answer these questions. - Analyze quantitative data to uncover relationships between theoretically relevant variables. - Effectively use statistical methods to conduct political science research. - Effectively employ R, a widely used statistical software package, to conduct political science research.
Indicative Reading / Resources	- Johnson, J.B., Reynolds, H.T., & Mycoff, J.D. (2016). Political Science Research Methods, 8th edition. CQ Press. - Learning Statistics with R (2015). Freely available at learningstatisticswithr.com/lsr-0.6.pdf - Toshkov, D. (2016). Research Design in Political Science. Bloomsbury Publishing. - Manheim, J.B., Rich, R.C., Willnat, L., Brians, C.L., & Babb, J. (2012). Empirical Political Analysis: An Introduction to Research Methods. Pearson Education. - Field, A., Miles, J., & Field, Z. (2012). Discovering Statistics Using R. Sage Publications.

Assessment

Assessment Components	Examination 60%; Group research paper 18%; Individual contribution statement 2%; Homework assignments 20%
Assessment Details	The examination covers both research methods and statistics. The remaining 40% is coursework: a co-authored group research paper in which students design and execute an empirical research project using secondary data, an accompanying individual contribution statement, and four homework assignments completed individually across the semester. Homework and paper assignments are submitted via Blackboard as Turnitin assignments; late submissions are penalised at 5 percentage points per day (capped at 30 points) unless a valid extension has been granted.

Additional Information

Prerequisites	POU22040
Co-requisites	None



Additional Information

Any other information

Students must have access to the free statistical software R and RStudio Desktop (installation is covered in class and in tutorials). Weekly tutorial attendance (from Week 2) is mandatory.