

**POL 196E: Research Methods for Political Science and Public Policy,  
UC Center Sacramento  
Friday 1:10 - 3:00PM, at UCCS**

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**Office:** UC Center Sacramento Room 223

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1:00pm-2:00pm, Fridays 12:00pm-1:00pm, and by appointment

### **Course Objectives**

POL 196E is a course designed to bridge the internship experience with the academic study of related disciplines such as political science and public policy. The ability to translate empirical evidence for use in policy debates is central to policymaking. As a member of the policy community students require a sophisticated understanding of a variety of types of data and policy analysis. This course will introduce strategies for data analysis and collection, study design, and principles for evaluating research. Topics will include: experimental design, case study evaluation, small-n studies, survey and questionnaire design, sampling, measurement construction and reliability, formal modeling, game theory, agent-based modeling, and hypothesis testing.

### **Course Outline:\***

Friday, 1/12: Identifying the Focus of Research  
Friday, 1/19: Research Design and Experimental Methods  
Friday, 1/26: Observational Studies  
Friday, 2/2: Surveys and Qualtrics  
Friday, 2/9: Data Visualization  
Friday, 2/16: Data Visualization and ArcGIS  
Friday, 2/23: Measurement Construction and Reliability  
Friday, 3/2: Research Posters  
Friday, 3/9: Formal Models, Game Theory, and Agent-Based Modeling  
Wednesday, 3/14: Undergraduate Research Poster Showcase  
Friday, 3/16: Public Policy Simulation

## Grading

Course grades for POL 196E are based on the following components:

- Attendance, participation, and in-class assignments [20%]
- Research Poster proposal [20%]
- Research Poster [60%]

*Attendance, participation, and in-class assignments:* Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive to class on time. Students should come to class prepared to discuss any assigned readings and complete the in-class assignments. Grades will be based off attendance and participation in in-class activities including class discussion, in-class assignments, group work, elevator speeches, and practice poster presentations. Students that constructively contribute to class discussion most regularly and fully participate in other in-class activities will receive a boost to their attendance and participation grade. Students that do not contribute to in-class discussion or fully participate in other in-class activities will receive a lower grade. Any student that has more than two unexcused absences will not be able to receive a passing grade for the class.

During the course of the quarter students will also complete in-class assignments designed to help them with their Research Poster and overall research projects. Assignments will be completed independently or in groups, students are encouraged to bring their laptops to class for these assignments.

*Research Poster proposal:* During the fourth or fifth week of the quarter students will submit a ~2 page proposal for their Research Poster via Canvas. The proposal will outline the intended research project and provide a road map for your analysis.

*Research Poster* The Research Poster is designed to provide students with a critical learning experience as well as an opportunity to engage in active research. For the poster you be will required to gather, analyze and report on an important public policy issue in California. This Research Poster will be presented at the UC Davis Undergraduate Research Poster Showcase at the end of the academic quarter. Additional information on the poster will be provided in class and made available on Canvas. The Research Poster will be due, via Canvas, during the last week of the course. All work must be in line with the UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct.

## Course Policies

*Late Policy:* Extensions will be allowed only in the event of a medical or family emergency. The emergency must be documented [doctor's note] in order to be able to have an extension. If documentation is provided, then a decision will be made regarding whether you will be granted an extension. Any requests for an incomplete must be accompanied by a written medical report.

*Grade Appeals:* Students will have one week from when grades are posted to appeal their grade. All appeals must include a typed, double spaced statement explaining why you are requesting a grade appeal, and you must justify with evidence from your exam, paper, or summaries. If you choose to appeal your grade, the instructor reserves the right to increase or decrease the existing grade.

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\*Course schedule subject to change/adjustment.

### **Academic Honesty**

As a University of California student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy. Cheating and other violations of academic honesty are serious offenses. Students are expected to work independently on all graded assignments. Please refer to the UC Davis policy on integrity of scholarship for further details. Students who engage in cheating will earn an F grade.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Any student who, because of a disability, may require some special arrangements in order to meet any of the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to request accommodation for individual learning needs. UC Davis and the UC Center will make every attempt to accommodate all qualified students with disabilities.

**Laptops and tablets are permitted in-class for note-taking only. Please do not disrupt your classmates by surfing the web or engaging in other activities**