Spring 2014
International Relations 211: Approaches to Research

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Office Hours: Wed. 10:00-11:00 a.m.

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Office Hours: Tu, Th, 1:00-2:30

Course Description

IR 211 is the complement to IR 210. This sequence of classes is required for all IR majors and for IR honors. The purpose of IR 211 is to introduce you to approaches toward research. International Relations is a diverse, multidisciplinary field of study. Our texts represent more than one social science in reflection of that reality.

The lectures will run in sequence with Earl Babbie’s text, The Practice of Social Research. (It is important to note that the lectures will complement rather than duplicate Babbie’s presentation.) Babbie’s book, now in its twelfth edition, includes excellent supplementary materials. For example, the CD ROM will be a great asset to you in reviewing for the exams and preparing your paper. The text by W. Phillips Shively, The Craft of Political Research, will help by providing substantive illustrations in another discipline of many concepts from Babbie.

The overall purpose of this course is to provide fundamental material about approaches to research while also conveying the need for skepticism as the foundation of scientific inquiry. Fred Leavitt’s text, Evaluating Scientific Research: Separating Fact from Fiction, will be invaluable in the latter sense.

The mid-term examination will take place on March 4 and have a short answer and essay format. The final examination, held on May 13, also will have a short answer and essay format and is cumulative (i.e., will cover all material from the start of the semester). (The time of the final examination cannot be altered, so please do not book a flight and then request an earlier exam.) Study guides will be provided so you can prepare effectively for each respective exam. All of the material from the lectures, assigned readings, and discussion sections will be tested on the exams.
The term essay, limited to ten double-spaced pages, is due in class on May 1. The topic will be worked out with your teaching assistant. A one-page, double-spaced outline of your paper is due in class on April 3 or there will be a 20% penalty on the paper grade. The outline should include an overview of what the paper will accomplish. A three-page outline, along with a tentative set of references that consist of scholarly articles and books, is due in class on April 17 or there will a 20% penalty on the paper grade. Sources other than scholarly articles and books may be used with permission of your teaching assistant.

This course will depend on effective participation from you. Attendance and class participation, worth 20% of your final grade, is very important and I expect everyone to read the assignments that appear for each date prior to each lecture.

All assignments are subject to change as noted in class, although none is expected at this time.

Be sure to back up all of your computer files. Do not turn in your only copy of any requirement.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students requesting accommodations based on disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is 213-740-0776. Students must make their request in the stipulated period prior to an exam.

Make-up Requirements

There will be no make-up assignments or tests for unexcused absences. Acceptable excuses, meaning medical or family emergencies and official university-related business, must be provided either to your teaching assistant in person, in writing, or by phone before an absence and in writing afterwards in order to be considered. Students who are unable to complete a requirement for legitimate reasons that do not qualify as excused under university guidelines, and who notify their teaching assistant ahead of time may, at the latter’s discretion, complete a requirement belatedly. Any requirement turned in on the day that it is due but after class meets will face a 20% penalty. Each additional late day will mean an additional 20% deduction.
Please be aware, when you book your flights for the end of semester break, that it is not acceptable to depart until after the final examination.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Students are expected to observe all rules of proper classroom conduct. In order to insure an appropriate environment conducive to learning by all: no cell phone calls, incoming or outgoing, are allowed in this class; please turn off your cell phone. Texting or using your computer for anything but class-related purposes also is not permitted.

It is not permitted to come to class late. Late arrivals disrupt the class and distract both the instructor and students who have come on time. After the first week of class, the door to the room will be closed and no one will be permitted to enter after class begins. A sign will be posted on the door as a reminder.

**Policy on Academic Ethics and Honesty**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person’s work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting or collaboration, consult your teaching assistant. For more information on USC policies regarding student integrity and plagiarism, see [http://dornsife.usc.edu/usc-policies/#plagiarism](http://dornsife.usc.edu/usc-policies/#plagiarism).

**Required Reading**

Please buy the books by Babbie and Shively. The book by Leavitt is out of print, so we have put it up on Blackboard with the author’s permission. Previous editions of the books are not acceptable as substitutes. These are available at the bookstore:


**Course Requirements**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Examination (March 4)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Final Examination (May 13, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Term Essay (due May 1, one-page outline due on April 3 and three-page outline due on April 17)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Attendance and Class Participation (includes discussion section)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Human Inquiry and Science</td>
<td>Babbie, pp. 2-30, Leavitt, ix-xiv</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Paradigms, Theory, and Social Research, Part I</td>
<td>Babbie, pp. 31-61; Shively, pp. 1-13</td>
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<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Paradigms, Theory, and Social Research, Part II</td>
<td>Leavitt, pp. 1-27; Shively, pp. 14-41</td>
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<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>The Ethics and Politics of Social Research</td>
<td>Babbie, pp. 62-86; Leavitt, pp. 28-45, 201-209</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>In-Class Exercise</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>Babbie, pp. 90-123; Shively, pp. 73-95; Leavitt, pp. 46-56</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6  Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement, Part I  
Babbie, pp. 124-159; Shively, pp. 42-72

11  Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement, Part II  
Leavitt, pp. 57-89

13  Indexes, Scales, and Typologies  
Babbie, pp. 160-186

18  The Logic of Sampling, Part I  
Babbie, pp. 187-227

Note: study guide provided for mid-term examination

20  The Logic of Sampling, Part II  
Shively, pp. 96-110

25  Experiments, Part I  
Babbie, pp. 230-252

27  Experiments, Part II  
Leavitt, pp. 90-125

March 4  Mid-term Examination

6  Survey Research  
Babbie, pp. 253-294; Leavitt, pp. 161-179

11  Qualitative Field Research  
Babbie, pp. 295-330; Leavitt, pp. 135-154, 156-160

13  Unobtrusive Research  
Babbie, pp. 331-361

18, 20  Classes Cancelled: Spring Recess
25 Evaluation Research
Babbie, pp. 362-388

27 Paper Proposal Working Session

April 1 Qualitative Data Analysis, I
Babbie, pp. 393-420

3 Qualitative Data Analysis, II

Note: first stage of the outline of the term essay is due in class today

8 Qualitative Data Analysis, III

10 Reading and Writing Social Research
Babbie, pp. 505-530, A2-A11

15 Quantitative Data Analysis, Part I
Babbie, pp. 421-447; Leavitt, pp. 126-134; Shively, pp. 111-131

17 Quantitative Data Analysis, Part II
Shively, pp. 132-148

Note: second stage of outline of the term essay is due in class today

22 The Elaboration Model
Babbie, pp. 448-465

24 Social Statistics, I
Babbie, pp. 466-504; Shively, pp. 149-165; Leavitt, pp. 189-200

Note: study guide provided for final examination

29 Social Statistics, II
Shively, pp. 167-169
May 1  Open Session: Exam Review

Note: Term Essay Due in Class