

POLI:3001:0001: Hawkeye Poll

Fall 2019

Instructor:	Jielu Yao	Location:	150 SH
Email:	jielu-yao@uiowa.edu	Time:	T.Th. 3:30 – 4:45PM
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Course Description

Public opinion polls are a vital component of contemporary politics. The aim of this course is to help students learn the conceptual tools and practical skills required to design, conduct, and interpret surveys. Students in this course will help design and participate in the fall 2019 Hawkeye Poll, a cooperative venture between faculty and graduate students in the Department of Political Science. Together we will explore the fundamental elements of survey research: selecting a sample, survey design, question wording, implementing the poll in a call center environment, interpreting the responses, and writing press releases. Students will place questions on the survey, conduct the survey, analyze the results, and notify the media of their outcomes. With the 2020 Iowa Democratic caucuses approaching, we will be doing an Iowa-focused edition of the Hawkeye Poll, focusing on important public policy, social, political issues, and opinions in Iowa. The Hawkeye Poll received local, national, and international attention during the 2016 and 2018 Iowa caucuses and the presidential election; we hope to garner the same sort of media with the 2020 Iowa Democratic caucuses.

In general, each week is divided into two sessions. Tuesday sessions focus on the theoretical concepts and framework for understanding survey research and political analysis. Thursday classes provide analytical and statistical research skills that help students analyze data. In addition, students will develop a working knowledge of Stata, a widely used data analysis and graphics software during Thursday sessions. The class will meet in a multipurpose classrooms, so expect interactive class sessions with group activities. Outside the classroom, we will implement the poll in the call center of the Iowa Social Science Research Center for about 10-15 hours in October.

Readings will serve as an introduction and supplement to the topics addresses in class, so students are expected to be familiar with the reading before class. Classes will introduce materials not covered in the reading, so on-time attendance is highly recommended. Note that class participation is a large part of the final grade. Please note the policy on late assignments below.

Note that this course can, upon request, substitute for Guided Research Tutorial (POLI:4701:0IND) or an Honors Research Project (POLI:4600:0IND) for students pursuing either a BS degree in Political Science or Honors in Political Science. Please discuss with me this early in the semester if you are interested.

Reading Materials

- *Survey Research Methods, Fifth Edition* by Floyd J Fowler, Jr. 2014. USA: Sage Publications, Inc. ISBN-13: 978-1452259000
- *The Essentials of Political Analysis, Fifth Edition* by Pollack, Philip H. 2015. USA: CQ Press. ISBN-13: 978-1506305837
- (Optional) *A Stata Companion to Political Analysis, Fourth Edition* by Pollock, Philip H., Edwards, Barry C. 2019. USA: CQ Press. ISBN-13: 978-1506379708
- Additional weekly reading materials will be provided through ICON.

Software

We will be using Stata to analyze data throughout the semester. Stata is available via the UIowa Virtual Desktop as well as in Political Science Collab (334 SH). While the Virtual Desktop and the Collab should suffice for the semester, students are encouraged but not required to purchase Stata's \$48 6-month [student license](#). The Collab TAs Byung-Deuk Woo and Willow Kreutzer also hold office hours. If you have computing questions, you can take advantage of this additional resource. Detailed instruction on how to get started with Stata will be provided in class.

Grading

The grading scale for this class is as follows: 100-98 = A+; 93-97 = A; 90-92 = A-; 88-89 = B+; 83-87 = B; 80-82 = B-; 78-79 = C+; 73-77 = C; 70-72 = C-; 68-69 = D+; 63-67 = D; 60-62 = D-; 59 or below = F.

- **Class attendance (10%):** Active involvement in a shared learning involvement is among the most vital elements of this class. As much of our class will consist of interactive discussion and group activities as we design, analyze, and interpret the survey, I expect you to attend. I will allow one unexcused absence, no questions asked. Beyond that, please speak with me in advance to discuss excused absences, which should happen only in unusual circumstances such as health or family issues.
- **Class participation and group assignments (25%):** We will spend a fair amount of time talking as a class and working in small groups to develop questions, analyze data, discuss survey results, etc. I expect everyone to participate in these endeavors (10%). Groups will occasionally do more formal assignments, such as data analyses and press releases (15%).
- **Quizzes (15%):** There will be five quizzes through the semester. The quizzes will cover the main points from the assigned readings. Make-up quizzes will be given only in unusual circumstances such as health or family issues. If you need to reschedule a quiz, you must contact me before the scheduled exam.
- **Survey Participation (20%):** This involves completing IRB certification (5%) by the listed deadline, participating in the survey calling training session (5%), and completing the required hours of calling (10%). The exact number of calling hours will depend on enrollment in this course as well as students signing up through other courses but will probably be around 10 – 15 hours. You must fully complete each of these to get credit – there is no partial credit for any of these categories. Please note that if you do not complete IRB certification you will not be eligible to call and will therefore receive a zero for that portion as well.
- **Final group project (30%):** Students need to finish five written assignments for final group project: 1) research topic/question (Sept 10, 2%), 2) survey questions (Sept 17, 3%), 3) research outline (October 15, 5%), (3) paper draft (Nov 21, 5%), and (4) final paper (December 18, 15%). More information will be provided in class.

Policy on Late Assignments: Assignments are all due at the time specified. Any late assignment or paper will have points reduced by 5% of the total available points per day unless arrangements are made prior to the due date. If you have a legitimate, personal reason for missing a scheduled assignment and cannot notify me in advance, please come talk to me afterwards and provide documentation.

Policy on Classroom Etiquette and Expectations

- **Discussion Etiquette:** This class will focus on in-class discussion. It is important to be respectful of everyone else's opinions and to phrase your contributions in a constructive manner. When you are in the classroom, your focus should be on the work at hand.
- **Computer Etiquette:** We will be spending a lot of time on the computers, please be respectful of me and the other students in the class by not spending time on the Internet unless it is contributing something to the class discussion. In addition to this, please silence your cell phones and refrain from texting during class.
- **Studying Expectations:** CLAS guidelines suggest that you should expect to do about 6 hours of work per week outside of class to prepare and study. Most of that time for this class should be spent completing the readings, working with your group on your presentations, and making sure that you understand the math and computational work we do in class.
- **Recommendations for Success:**
 - Please email me your favorite “memes” by Sept 2 to prove you have read the syllabus (1 bonus point).
 - Do the weekly reading and attend lectures. This should prepare you for the five quizzes that will occur during the semester.
 - Regularly consult ICON. Class materials and deadlines will be posted to the ICON website. Occasionally, polls or other online discussions will be administered through ICON. These activities may count towards your participation grade.
 - During in-class discussions and group activities, make an effort to contribute to the group. This will make the class more interesting for you and will ensure that you receive full credit for class participation.
 - Make sure to stay up on the deadlines for the Poll, as well as complete all the requirements to participate. The completion of all of the requirements is necessary to receive credit for that section. It should be easy for you to get full credit for this portion of your grade.

Calendar

The calendar below gives the dates of exams and other important deadlines for the course. Readings should be completed **prior** to the start of the class. This calendar is subject to change. Any changes will be announced and posted on ICON.

Week 1: Introduction

- **Tue, Aug 27:** No class due to the APSA conference
 - Reading assignment: 1) Syllabus; 2) Pollock, Introduction; 3) Cohn, Nate. A 2016 Review: Why Key State Polls were Wrong about Trump? New York Times, 5/31/2017, available at ICON
- **Thu, Aug 29:** No class due to the APSA conference
 - Reading assignment: 1) Fowler, Chapter 1 Introduction; 2) Check out the following two websites that focus on opinion poll analysis and politics: [FiveThirtyEight](#) and [Real Clear Politics](#)

Week 2: Survey Errors

- **Tue, Sept 3:** Class introduction; introduction to survey research methods; types of errors in surveys
 - Reading assignment: Fowler, Chapter 2
- **Thu, Sept 5:** Discussion of possible question topics
 - Reading assignment: 1) Pollock, Chapter 1; 2) Previous Hawkeye poll survey instruments, available at ICON
 - Stata: Get started with Stata
 - Group assignment #1 (due at 3pm on Sept 10): 1) Submit a research topic for the final group project; 2) Write your first Stata program.

Week 3: Designing Survey Questions

- **Tue, Sept 10:** Designing survey questions and instruments
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 2; Fowler, Chapter 6
- **Thu, Sept 12:** Evaluating survey questions
 - Reading assignment: Fowler, Chapter 7
 - Stata: Data management (Part I)
 - Group assignment #2 (due at 3pm on Sept 17): Survey questions for the final group project

Week 4: Sampling and Nonresponse

- **Tue, Sept 17:** Ethical issues in survey research
 - Reading assignment: Fowler, Chapter 11
 - Survey participation: IRB certification due at 5pm on Sept 18
 - Quiz #1 in class (materials covered in Week 1 – 3)
- **Thu, Sept 19:** Sampling and nonresponse
 - Reading assignment: Fowler, Chapter 3 – 4
 - Stata: Data management (Part II)

Week 5: Survey experiment

- **Tue, Sept 24:** Survey experiment (Part I)
 - Reading assignment: Oxford Handbook of Experiments on Survey Experiments, available at ICON
- **Thu, Sept 26:** Survey experiment (Part II)
 - Reading assignment: Redlawsk, Tolbert, and Franko (2011), available at ICON
 - Stata: Transforming variables

Week 6: Research Design and Control

- **Tue, Oct 1:** Proposing explanation, framing hypotheses and making comparison
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 3.
 - Quiz #2 in class (material covered in Week 4 - 5)
- **Thu, Oct 3:** Research design and the logic of control
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 4
 - Stata: Cross-tab analysis; graphing relationships
 - Group assignment #3 (due at 3pm on Oct 8)

Week 7: Analyzing Survey Data (Part I)

- **Tue, Oct 8:** Making controlled comparisons.
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 5
- **Thu, Oct 10:** Research outline for the final group project
 - Reading assignment: Assigned articles for the final group project, available at ICON
 - Group assignment #4: Submit a research outline for the final group project (due at 3pm on Oct 15)

Week 8: Analyzing Survey Data (Part II)

- **Tue, Oct 15:** Foundations of statistical inference.
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 6
 - Quiz #3 in class (material covered in Week 6 - 7)
- **Thu, Oct 17**
 - Stata: Graphing controlled comparisons
 - Survey participation: Finish the survey calling training session by Oct 20

Week 9: Analyzing Survey Data (Part III)

- **Tue, Oct 22:** Statistical Significance
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 7, pp.157-169
- **Thu, Oct 24**
 - Stata: The Chi-square test
 - Group assignment #5 (due at 3pm on Oct 29)

Week 10: Survey in the Field

- **Tue, Oct 29:** No class

- **Thu, Oct 31:** No class
 - Survey Participation: Complete the required hours of calling between Oct 28 and Nov 10

Week 11: Writing Press Releases

- **Tue, Nov 5:** Guest lecture by UI News Service
 - Reading assignment: Previous [Hawkeye poll press releases](#)
 - Quiz #4 in class (material covered in Week 8 - 9)
- **Thu, Nov 7:** To be announced

Week 12: Correlation and Linear Regression

- **Tue, Nov 12:** Correlation and bivariate regression
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 8, pp.183-200.
- **Thu, Nov 14:** Multiple regression
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 8, pp.201-209.
 - Stata: Correlation and linear regression using the 2019 Hawkeye Poll data

Week 13: Logistic Regression

- **Tue, Nov 19:** The logistic regression approach
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 9, pp.215-233
- **Thu, Nov 21:** Working with Probabilities
 - Reading assignment: Pollock, Chapter 9, pp.233-239
 - Stata: Logistic regression using the 2019 Hawkeye Poll data
 - Group assignment #6: Submit the paper draft for the final group project (due at 3pm on Dec 1)

Thanksgiving Recess: Nov 24 - Dec 1

Week 14: Communicating Results

- **Tue, Dec 3:** Data visualization using Stata
 - Quiz #5 in class (material covered in Week 11 - 13)
- **Thu, Dec 5:** In-class workshop for the final group project

Week 15: Presentation

- **Tue, Dec 10:** No class; working on the final group project
- **Thu, Dec 12:** Group presentation
 - Group assignment #7: Final paper is due at 3pm on Dec 18

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Information and Policies for Undergraduates

Absences and Attendance

Students are responsible for attending class and for contributing to the learning environment of a course. Students are also responsible for knowing the absence policies for their courses, which will vary by instructor. All absence policies, however, must uphold the UI policy related to student illness, mandatory religious obligations, unavoidable circumstances, or University authorized activities (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences>). Students may use this absence form to communicate with instructors:

<https://clas.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/ABSENCE%20EXPLANATION%20FORM2019.pdf>

Academic Integrity

All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](#). Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through the UI email address (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code>).

Accommodations for Disabilities

UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student is then responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. More information is at <https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>.

Administrative Home of the Course

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and related policies. Other colleges may have different policies. CLAS policies may be found here: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>.

Communication and the Required Use of UI Email

Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to the UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](#)).

Complaints

Students with a complaint about a course should first visit with the instructor or course supervisor and then with the Chair of the department or program offering the course; students may next bring the issue to CLAS in 120 Schaeffer Hall. For more information, see <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities>.

Final Examination Policies

The final exam schedule is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals. Visit <https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies>.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom

UI is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University's Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (diversity.uiowa.edu).

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, please see <https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>.