PSC 203: Survey Research Methods

Fall 2011
Lecture: 2:00-3:15, Monday and Wednesday, Harkness 114
Course website: http://www.rochester.edu/College/faculty/mperess/srm2011.html

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OH: T 3-4:30

Overview: This course offers an introduction to the understanding of politics through data analysis, with particular emphasis on surveys of the mass public. We will study selecting a sample, designing and conducting a survey, interpreting the results of a survey, correcting for bias in a survey, and measuring the accuracy of a survey.

Recommended Books:

The following books will be on reserve in the library.

[1]   Agresti, Alan, and Barbara Finlay (1997). *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences*.

[2]   Groves, Robert M., Floyd J. Fowler, Jr., Mick P. Couper, James M. Lepkowski, Eleanor Singer, and Roger Touramgeau (2004). *Survey Methodology*.

[3]   Pollock, Phillip H., III (2005). *An SPSS Companion to Political Analysis*.

[4]   Weisberg, Herbert F., Jon A. Krosnick, and Bruce D. Bowen (1989). *An Introduction to Survey Research and Data Analysis*.

I would recommend purchasing used versions of the older editions of Pollock and Weisberg et al. They are selling for a few dollars on Amazon.com.

<u>Lecture Notes</u>: To supplement the readings, I will post lecture notes for some of the topics that we cover.

<u>Readings</u>: Course readings can be found on the course web page. I reserve the right to update the readings on the syllabus, but I will indicate on the course website which readings will be assigned at least one week in advance.

<u>Software</u>: We will be using Excel and SPSS in this class. You may use SPSS in the computer lab, or purchase a student copy for ~$40.

<u>Final Project</u>**:** The final project will require you to design, implement, and analyze a survey, using the different techniques we will cover in class. I will provide the exact details later in the course. The final project will be due on December 18th. The final two classes of the semester will involve short student presentations of the final projects.

<u>Data Analysis Assignments</u>: I will assign 6-7 data analysis assignments throughout the class, which will require you to use SPSS.

<u>Class Participation</u>: You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in class discussion. In addition, you should present at least once during the semester.

Presentations may be based on a reading I have assigned or one of the data analysis projects. I you like however, you may present more than once in order to build up extra class participation credit.

Exam: There will be one exam about two-thirds of the way through the class which will cover basic data analysis and survey analysis.

Grading: Grades will be based on the exam (25%), the data analysis assignments (25%), the final project (25%), and class participation (25%).