POL 251: Introduction to Political Science Methods

Spring 2002: M/W 4:00-5:15 in Hume 110 (likely to be changed)
Instructor: Chris Lawrence <cnlawren@olemiss.edu>
Office: 208 Deupree Hall. Hours: M/W 2:00-3:45 or by appointment.
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Course Web Page: *http://www.lordsutch.com/pol251/*
RSVP Course Code: 3992

Course Roadmap: As alluded to in the syllabus, the course is basically divided into two sections. The first portion of the course will introduce you to the process of political research, while the latter portion concentrates on statistics and probability.

I expect to cover the following topics before the midterm exam:

- What is Political Research? (Shively 1)

- Theory Building (Shively 2)

- Accuracy and Precision (Shively 4–5)

- Research Design, Literature Review, and Empirical Observation (Shively 6)

- Introduction to Statistics and Review of Basic Math (Schacht 1–2)

- Descriptive Statistics (Schacht 3)

- Central Tendancy (Schacht 4)

- Dispersion (Schacht 5)

- The Z Distribution (Schacht 6)

After the midterm (and Spring Break!), expect coverage of these topics:

- Probability (Schacht 7)

- Confidence Intervals (Schacht 8)

- Polling/Surveys (outside reading)

- Hypothesis Testing (Shively 9; Schacht 9)

- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) (Schacht 11)

- Correlation and Linear Regression (Schacht 10; Shively 7)

- Other types of research

We may also briefly discuss some of the more common statistical models you might see in political science articles (most notably, the logit and probit models) if we have time; however, you will not be expected to learn how to estimate them.