



New Course

SPA 615-  
Catalog Course Title: Conduct of Inquiry IV

Name and contact information for future correspondence:

Sarah Adler, sadler@american.edu, x2373

Academic Unit - School/College:

- CAS
- KSB
- SOC
- SIS
- SPA
- SPExS
- Other:

Teaching Unit - Department or Program: SPA - Justice Law & Criminology

Date effective: Fall 2016

Required Signatures	Name	Signature	Date
Teaching Unit Chair or Director	Joe Young		6/15/16
EPC Chair	Susan Glover	S. Glover <sup>-BMM</sup>	6/16/16
Primary Academic Unit Assoc. Dean	V. Wilkins	V. Wilkins	6/16/2016
Second Academic Unit Assoc. Dean			
Faculty Senate Chair			
Provost's Designee (VPUG or VPGR)			

Date sent to the Office of the University Registrar:



## New Course

**Note:** *Proposals are not necessary for a selected topics or nonrecurring topics course or project which is not a regular part of the curriculum of a department or school and is offered to a group of students on a nonrecurring or experimental basis. A course may be offered as a nonrecurring selected topics course a maximum of two times. If the academic unit wishes to make the topics course a permanent course, it must submit a New Course Proposal for full review.*

### Order of Review

After review by the academic unit, prepare the document for circulation and comments.

1. During the circulation and comment period (customarily 10 working days):
  - Send document to other academic units for comment.
  - Post the document for public comment. (Today@AU)
  - Respond to comments or make changes to the proposal as appropriate
2. At the end of the comment period:
  - If no adjustments are needed, the academic unit submits the proposal and compilation of comments and responses to [facultySenate@american.edu](mailto:facultySenate@american.edu).
  - If adjustments are needed, the academic unit rewrites and submits the proposal and compilation of comments and responses to [facultySenate@american.edu](mailto:facultySenate@american.edu).
  - *All comments to the proposal and responses to comments must be compiled into one PDF document and included with the proposal.*
3. The Faculty Senate conducts a formal review of the final proposal:
  - If the Faculty Senate returns the proposal to the unit for revision, every effort must be made to address its recommendations.
  - The Faculty Senate may reject a proposal if it is not satisfied with responses to its recommendations for changes to a proposal.
4. The Faculty Senate Chair submits the Faculty Senate's recommendation to the Office of the Provost.
5. The Provost or Provost Designee makes the final decision.
6. If approved by the Provost or Provost designee, the proposal is forwarded to the Office of the University Registrar via [curriculum\\_services@american.edu](mailto:curriculum_services@american.edu).

## Proposal Template

Copy and paste the questions below into a new MS Word document and address all questions asked. Please preserve the formatting (including numbering) to facilitate the review process.

- I. Identifying Information
  - a) Proposed effective date
  - b) Academic Unit
  - c) Teaching Unit
  - d) Course Title (Generally a limit of 30 characters including spaces)
  - e) Course Number
  - f) Credits
  - g) Prerequisites
  - h) Course description for University Catalog (Generally a limit of 50 words)
  - i) Grade type
    - i. A/F only
    - ii. Pass/Fail only
    - iii. A /F and Pass/Fail
  - j) Expected frequency of offering
    - i. Every Fall
    - ii. Every Spring
    - iii. Every Summer
    - iv. Alternate Falls
    - v. Alternate Springs
    - vi. Alternate Summers
    - vii. Every term
    - viii. Irregularly
    - ix. Other
  - k) Note all that apply:
    - i. General Education course
    - ii. Online course
    - iii. Hybrid course
    - iv. Rotating topics course
    - v. Individually supervised course, such as Internship, Independent Study, Research Course, Thesis, Dissertation
    - vi. Research Methods course
    - vii. AU Abroad Programs course
    - viii. Other study abroad course (offered directly by Academic Unit, not through AU Abroad)
- II. Rationale
  - a) Please explain the main purpose of the new course, including whether it will be a requirement for an existing or proposed program or an elective, and how the new course relates to the existing courses in the program and department. *Note: if the course will be required for an existing program, submit a corresponding Minor Change to Program proposal.*
  - b) Will the course require students to pay a special fee associated with the course? If so,

please provide a justification for this additional cost to students.

- c) Has the course previously been offered under a rotating topics course or an experimental course number? If so:
  - i. Semesters/year offered
  - ii. Course number
  - iii. Instructor
  - iv. Enrollment
  - v. What observations and conclusions were derived from the previous offering(s) that now lead to proposing this course as a permanent part of the curriculum?
- d) Please indicate other units that offer courses or programs related to the proposed course and provide documentation of consultations with those units.
- e) Estimate the enrollment per semester.
- f) Does your teaching unit's classroom space allotment support the addition of this course?
- g) Are present university facilities (library, technology) adequate for the proposed course?
- h) Will the proposed course be taught by full-time or part-time faculty?
- i) Will offering the new course involve any substantial changes to the scheduling of existing courses?
- j) What are the learning outcomes for the course?
- k) How will those outcomes be assessed?
- l) What are the competencies that students are expected to demonstrate for the course? Please attach a draft syllabus.

### III. Catalog Copy

- a) Please attach a course description as it is to appear in the University Catalog, following the format of the current catalog.

## I. Identifying Information

- a) Proposed effective date – **Fall 2016**
- b) Academic Unit – **School of Public Affairs**
- c) Teaching Unit – **School of Public Affairs (formerly a Public Administration & Policy course)**
- d) Course Title (Generally a limit of 30 characters including spaces) - **Conduct of Inquiry IV**
- e) Course Number – **SPA 615**
- f) Credits - **3**
- g) Prerequisites – **SPA 614 Conduct of Inquiry III**
- h) Course description for University Catalog (Generally a limit of 50 words) - **Increasingly social science research is concerned with causal inference. Experimental, quasi-experimental, and field designs intended to make causal inferences have special considerations outside of the standard econometric framework. The class is focused on causality, and examines this topic observationally, and experimentally. It is split into two parts: "Causal Framework" and "Field Methods." Prerequisite: SPA 614 Conduct of Inquiry III**
- i) Grade type
  - i. A/F only**
- j) Expected frequency of offering
  - i. Every Spring**
- k) Note all that apply:
  - vi. Research Methods course**

## II. Rationale

- a) Please explain the main purpose of the new course, including whether it will be a requirement for an existing or proposed program or an elective, and how the new course relates to the existing courses in the program and department. Note: if the course will be required for an existing program, submit a corresponding Minor Change to Program proposal. **This course will be an elective advanced research methods course for PhD students in the departments of Government, JLC, and Public Administration & Policy. Conduct IV is an elective continuation of the required research methods courses – Conduct I, II & III.**
- b) Will the course require students to pay a special fee associated with the course? If so, please provide a justification for this additional cost to students. **No.**
- c) Has the course previously been offered under a rotating topics course or an experimental course number? **YES.** If so:
  - i. Semesters/year offered – Spring 2016, Spring 2015.**

ii. Course number – **GOVT-696 Selected Topics: Non-Recurring – Conduct of Inquiry IV**

iii. Instructor – **Thomas Zeitzoff**

iv. Enrollment – **Spring 2016: 13, Spring 2015: 6**

v. What observations and conclusions were derived from the previous offering(s) that now lead to proposing this course as a permanent part of the curriculum? **Based on enrollments, there is significant interest in advanced methods courses for our PhDs. The opportunity for an advanced research methods sequence puts our PhD program on the cutting edge compared to other programs.**

d) Please indicate other units that offer courses or programs related to the proposed course and provide documentation of consultations with those units. **The Department of Public Administration and Policy and the Department of Government had traditionally split the Conduct of Inquiry courses between the two departments. This new course request is part of an SPA-wide movement to bring this sequence of courses to the SPA course marker.**

e) Estimate the enrollment per semester. **20**

f) Does your teaching unit's classroom space allotment support the addition of this course? **Yes.**

g) Are present university facilities (library, technology) adequate for the proposed course? **Yes.**

h) Will the proposed course be taught by full-time or part-time faculty? **Full-time.**

i) Will offering the new course involve any substantial changes to the scheduling of existing courses? **No.**

j) What are the learning outcomes for the course?

1. **Demonstrate the ability to understand the causal inference framework.**
2. **Identify threats to causal identification.**
3. **Design and implement sophisticated research design to estimate causal effects.**
4. **Identify the tradeoffs between field and laboratory designs.**

k) How will those outcomes be assessed?

**Participation/Attendance (10%)**

**Presentations (30%)**

**Replication Project (10%)**

**Research Design Proposal Presentation and Feedback (10 %)**

**Final Project (40%) Paper (30%) + Presentation (10%)**

l) What are the competencies that students are expected to demonstrate for the course? Please attach a draft syllabus. **See attached.**

### III. Catalog Copy

- a) Please attach a course description as it is to appear in the University Catalog, following the format of the current catalog.

### **SPA 615 – Conduct of Inquiry IV (3)**

**Increasingly social science research is concerned with causal inference. Experimental, quasi-experimental, and field designs intended to make causal inferences have special considerations outside of the standard econometric framework. The class is focused on causality, and examines this topic observationally, and experimentally. It is split into two parts: "Causal Framework" and "Field Methods." Prerequisite: SPA 614 Conduct of Inquiry III**

**Conduct IV: Causal Inference in the Lab, the Field, and in Nature**  
**GOVT-696**  
**Spring 2016**

**Instructor:** Thomas Zeitzoff, Assistant Professor

**Schedule:** Wednesdays 2:35-5:15PM, Ward 201

**Office:** Ward 249

**Office hours:** Wednesdays 11:00AM-12:30PM, Thursdays 2:00PM-3:30PM or by appointment

**Email:** zeitzoff@american.edu

**Course Description**

Increasingly social science research is concerned with causal inference. Experimental, quasi-experimental, and field designs intended to make causal inferences have special considerations outside of the standard econometric framework. The class will be focused on causality, and will examine this topic observationally, and experimentally. It will be split into two parts: "Causal Framework" and "Field Methods."

**Learning Outcomes (things you will know after taking this class)**

1. Demonstrate the ability to understand the causal inference framework.
2. Identify threats to causal identification.
3. Design and implement sophisticated research design to estimate causal effects.
4. Identify the tradeoffs between field and laboratory designs.

**Readings and Software**

There are no required books for this course. All of the readings and materials will be available on Blackboard. However, we will draw on material from the following texts, and you may find purchasing them helpful for your own research.

- Morgan, Stephen L., and Christopher Winship. *Counterfactuals and Causal Inference: Methods and Principles for Social Research*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Angrist, Joshua D., and Jörn-Steffen Pischke. *Mastering 'metrics: The Path from Cause to Effect*. Princeton University Press, 2014.
- Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. *Field experiments: Design, analysis, and interpretation*. WW Norton, 2012.

As for software, students may use whatever they want but instructor support will be given for R and Stata.



## **Sharing of Course Content**

Students are not permitted to make visual or audio recordings, including live streaming, of classroom lectures or any class related content, using any type of recording devices (e.g., smart phone, computer, digital recorder, etc.) unless prior permission from the instructor is obtained, and there are no objections from any of the students in the class. If permission is granted, personal use and sharing of recordings and any electronic copies of course materials (e.g., PowerPoints, formulas, lecture notes and any classroom discussions online or otherwise) is limited to the personal use of students registered in the course and for educational purposes only, even after the end of the course.

Exceptions will be made for students who present a signed Letter of Accommodation from the Academic Support and Access Center. See: How Do I Request Accommodations?

< <http://www.american.edu/ocl/asac/Accommodations.cfm> >

To supplement the classroom experience, lectures may be audio or video recorded by faculty and made available to students registered for this class. Faculty may record classroom lectures or discussions for pedagogical use, future student reference, or to meet the accommodation needs of students with a documented disability. These recordings are limited to personal use and may not be distributed (fileshare), sold, or posted on social media outlets without the written permission of faculty.

Unauthorized downloading, file sharing, distribution of any part of a recorded lecture or course materials, or using information for purposes other than the student's own learning may be deemed a violation of *American University's Student Conduct Code* and subject to disciplinary action (see Student Conduct Code VI. Prohibited Conduct).

## **Academic Integrity**

I take issues of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Please familiarize yourself with the AU Academic Integrity Code. I regard violations of this code seriously and will immediately refer the matter to the dean. If you have any questions about the course, or more general requirements about the code, please do not hesitate to talk to me.

## **Assessment**

***Participation/Attendance (10%)***

***Presentations (30%)***

***Replication Project (10%)***

***Research Design Proposal Presentation and Feedback (10 %)***

***Final Project (40%) Paper (30%) + Presentation (10%)***

**\*\*NOTE: LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED\*\***

## **Students Resources**

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please do not hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

***Academic Support Center*** (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.

***Disability Support Services*** (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability and might require accommodations in this course, please notify me with a letter from DSS or ASC early in the semester so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

***Counseling Center*** (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

**Writing Center** in 228 Battelle-Tompkins offers free, individual coaching sessions to all AU students. In your 45-minute session, a student writing consultant can help you address assignments, understand the conventions of academic writing, and learn how to revise and edit your own work. The Center offers appointments on the hour from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, and 3 to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Call 202- 885- 2991 to arrange a session.

***Center for Diversity & Inclusion*** is dedicated to enhancing LGBTQ, Multicultural, First Generation, and Women's experiences on campus and to advance AU's commitment to respecting & valuing diversity by serving as a resource and liaison to students, staff, and faculty on issues of equity through education, outreach, and advocacy. It is located on the 2nd floor of Mary Graydon Center: 202-885-3651, email is [cdi@american.edu](mailto:cdi@american.edu).

***Dean of Students Office*** (x3300, 408 Butler Pavilion) offers one-on-one meetings to discuss academic, adjustment, and personal issues that may be interfering with a student's ability to succeed academically. The DOS office also verifies documentation for students who have medical or mental health issues that cause them to be absent from class.

## **Emergency Preparedness**

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional

term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site ([american.edu/emergency](http://american.edu/emergency)) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/college-specific information.

## **THEORY**

Week 1 (January 13) Intro/Jay Lyall

Week 2 (January 20) Counterfactuals and Randomization

- *Theory*
  - Winship, Christopher, and Stephen L. Morgan. "The estimation of causal effects from observational data." *Annual review of sociology* (1999): 659-706.
- *Presentations*
  - Angrist, Joshua D., Parag A. Pathak, and Christopher R. Walters. "Explaining charter school effectiveness." No. w17332. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2011.
  - Voigtländer, Nico, and Hans-Joachim Voth. "Persecution Perpetuated: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitic Violence in Nazi Germany." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127.3 (2012): 1339-1392.

Week 3 (January 27) Laboratory Experiments

- *Theory*
  - McDermott, Rose. "Experimental methods in political science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 5.1 (2002): 31-61.
  - \*\*Take NIH Protecting Research Participants!\*\*  
<https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>
- *Presentations*
  - McDermott, Rose, et al. "Monoamine oxidase A gene (MAOA) predicts behavioral aggression following provocation." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 106.7 (2009): 2118-2123.
  - Levitt, Steven D., and John A. List. "What do laboratory experiments measuring social preferences reveal about the real world?." *The journal of economic perspectives* (2007): 153-174.

- Fehr, Ernst, and Simon Gächter. "Altruistic punishment in humans." *Nature* 415.6868 (2002): 137-140.

#### Week 4 (February 3) Regression, Control, and Panel Methods

##### \*\*Assign Replication\*\*

- *Theory*
  - Mastering Metrics (Chapter 2)
  - Freedman, David A. "Statistical models and shoe leather." *Sociological methodology* 21.1 (1991): 201-313.
- *Presentations*
  - Ross, Michael L. "Oil, Islam, and women." *American Political Science Review* 102.01 (2008): 107-123.
  - Fisman, Raymond. "Estimating the value of political connections." *American Economic Review* (2001): 1095-1102.
  - Levitt, Steven D. "Using electoral cycles in police hiring to estimate the effect of police on crime." *The American Economic Review* (1997): 270-290.

#### Week 5 (February 10) Instrumental Variables

- *Theory*
  - Sovey, Allison J., and Donald P. Green. "Instrumental variables estimation in political science: A readers' guide." *American Journal of Political Science* 55.1 (2011): 188-200.
- *Presentations*
  - Miguel, Edward, Shanker Satyanath, and Ernest Sergenti. "Economic shocks and civil conflict: An instrumental variables approach." *Journal of political Economy* 112.4 (2004): 725-753.
  - Angrist, Joshua D., and Alan B. Krueger. "Does Compulsory School Attendance Affect Schooling and Earnings?." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 106.4 (1991): 979-1014.
  - Madestam, A., Shoag, D., Veuger, S., & Yanagizawa-Drott, D. (2013). Do Political Protests Matter? Evidence from the Tea Party Movement\*. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

## Week 6 (February 17) Matching/RDD

### \*\*Replication Due\*\*

- *Theory*
  - Rubin, Donald B. "The design versus the analysis of observational studies for causal effects: parallels with the design of randomized trials." *Statistics in medicine* 26.1 (2007): 20-36.
  - King, Gary, and Richard Nielsen. "Why Propensity Scores Should Not Be Used For Matching." (2016).
  
- *Presentations*
  - Lyall, Jason. "Are coethnics more effective counterinsurgents? Evidence from the second Chechen war." *American Political Science Review* 104.01 (2010): 1-20.
  - Klofstad, Casey A., Anand Edward Sokhey, and Scott D. McClurg. "Disagreeing about disagreement: How conflict in social networks affects political behavior." *American Journal of Political Science* 57.1 (2013): 120-134.
  - Samii, Cyrus. "Perils or Promise of Ethnic Integration? Evidence from a Hard Case in Burundi." *American Political Science Review* 107.03 (2013): 558-573.

## Week 7 (February 24) Quasi Experiments/ "Natural Experiments"

### \*\*Assign Research Design/Final Paper\*\*

- *Theory*
  - Sekhon, Jasjeet S., and Rocio Titiunik. "When natural experiments are neither natural nor experiments." *American Political Science Review* 106.01 (2012): 35-57:588-604.
  
- *Presentation*
  - Getmansky, Anna, and Thomas Zeitzoff. "Terrorism and Voting: The Effect of Exposure to Rockets on Voting in Israeli Elections." 108.03 (2014).
  - Dube, Arindrajit, Oeindrila Dube, and Omar García-Ponce. "Cross-Border Spillover: US Gun Laws and Violence in Mexico." *American Political Science Review* 107.03 (2013): 397-417.

## Week 8 (March 2) Survey Design

- *Theory*
  - Selections: Groves, Robert M., Floyd J. Fowler Jr, Mick P. Couper, James M. Lepkowski, Eleanor Singer, and Roger Tourangeau. *Survey methodology*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

- Krosnick, Jon A. "Survey research." *Annual review of psychology* 50.1 (1999): 537-567.
- *Presentation*
  - Scacco, Alexandra. "Who Riots? Explaining Individual Participation in Ethnic Violence." PhD diss., Columbia University, 2010.
  - Blair, Graeme, C. Christine Fair, Neil Malhotra, and Jacob N. Shapiro. "Poverty and support for militant politics: Evidence from Pakistan." *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 1 (2013): 30-48.

Week 9 (March 9) NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (March 16) Research Design Presentations

### **FIELD METHODS**

Week 11 (March 23) Survey Experiments and Randomized Response

- *Theory*
  - Gaines, Brian J., James H. Kuklinski, and Paul J. Quirk. "The logic of the survey experiment reexamined." *Political Analysis* 15.1 (2007): 1-20.
- *Presentation*
  - Hainmueller, Jens, and Michael J. Hiscox. "Attitudes toward highly skilled and low-skilled immigration: Evidence from a survey experiment." *American Political Science Review* 104.01 (2010): 61-84.
  - Rosenfeld, Bryn, Kosuke Imai, and Jacob Shapiro. "An empirical validation study of popular survey methodologies for sensitive questions." Working paper. *American Journal of Political Science* (2015).

Week 12 (March 30) Field Experiments

- *Theory*
  - Humphreys, Macartan, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. "Field experiments and the political economy of development." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 367-378.
- *Presentation*
  - Bond, Robert M., et al. "A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization." *Nature* 489.7415 (2012): 295-298.
  - Findley, Michael G., Daniel L. Nielson, and Jason Campbell Sharman. "Using field experiments in international relations: A randomized study of anonymous incorporation." *International Organization* 67.04 (2013): 657-693.
  - Henrich, Joseph, Robert Boyd, Samuel Bowles, Colin Camerer, Ernst Fehr, Herbert Gintis, and Richard McElreath. "In search of homo

economicus: behavioral experiments in 15 small-scale societies."  
*American Economic Review* (2001): 73-78.

## **SPECIAL TOPICS**

Week 13 (April 6) Simulation and Bayesian Methods

- *Theory*
  - Jackman, Simon. "Bayesian analysis for political research." *Annual Review Political Science*. 7 (2004): 483-505.
- *Presentation*
  - Barberá, Pablo. "Birds of the same feather tweet together: Bayesian ideal point estimation using Twitter data." *Political Analysis* 23.1 (2015): 76-91.
  - Slapin, Jonathan B., and Sven-Oliver Proksch. "A scaling model for estimating time-series party positions from texts." *American Journal of Political Science* 52.3 (2008): 705-722.
  - Lax, Jeffrey R., and Justin H. Phillips. "How should we estimate public opinion in the states?." *American Journal of Political Science* 53.1 (2009): 107-121.

Week 14 (April 13) Student Choice: Spatial Statistics, Time Series, or Other)?

Week 15 (April 20) Final Presentations

**\*\*Final Paper Due\*\***