

# Gov 2008 Experimental Political Science

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Spring 2012 Tuesdays 2-4 PM

CGIS K-108

Office hours

Enos Thursday 2-4pm

Tingley, by appointment

## Overview

The use of experimental and quasi-experimental data in political science is increasingly common. Researchers in comparative politics, American politics and international relations, and even political theory, are incorporating laboratory, survey, field, and natural experiments into their research designs. And the field of political methodology is regularly contributing to ways that experimental and quasi-experimental data may be analyzed.

This graduate level class will introduce students to experimental techniques and applications of experiments in political science. We will cover arguments about why experiments are useful, and arguments about why they are not useful. No one type of experimentation will be privileged and instead we will cover a variety of approaches.

While we will cover some statistical material, this class is not a substitute for the standard graduate methodology sequence. Students must have taken Gov 2000 and 2001 either prior to taking the class, or concurrently with 2001. While a graduate level class, undergraduates with exceptional prior training will be considered on a case by case basis.

There are three types of assignments. First, students will submit weekly typed notes on the readings. Each student will select two papers to write out notes for. For remaining papers students will submit two questions they have about the reading. We expect all students to have thoroughly done all readings. A recommended reading section contains additional readings should you wish to explore further. Second, everyone will present to the class a summary and critique of a paper chosen by the instructors. Finally, students will collaborate to produce a final project that contains an original experimental design and preliminary data collection. Class size will dictate the number of collaborative groups.

## Grades

30% weekly notes (1-2 pages including summary of main points, criticisms, and discussion questions, submitted to iSites prior to Monday at 2pm)

25% presentation

45% final project

## Required Books

Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science, Eds. Druckman et al.  
("Handbook")

Experimental Political Science and the Study of Causality: From Nature to the Lab  
Rebecca, Morton and Kenneth Williams ("Morton/Williams")

### **Part 1: Introduction to Experiments and Experimental Inference (Why experiments?)**

*Week 1-Introduction to experiments in Political Science (January 24<sup>th</sup>)*

Druckman, James N., Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski, and Arthur Lupia. 2006. "The Growth and Development of Experimental Research Political Science." *American Political Science Review* 100: 627-635.

Handbook Chapter 6: Laboratory Experiments in Political Science (Shanto Iyengar)

Handbook Chapter 8: The Logic and Design of the Survey Experiment: An Autobiography of a Methodological Innovation (Paul Sniderman)

Handbook Chapter 9: Field Experiments in Political Science (Alan Gerber)

### **Recommended**

Johnson, George. 2008. *The Ten Most Beautiful Experiments*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Morton/Williams Chapter 2 "Experiments and Causal Relations" (highly recommended)

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Edward H. Kaplan. 2004. "The Illusion of Learning from Observational Research". In Ian Shapiro, Rogers Smith, and Tarek Massoud, eds., *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 251-73.

*Week 2: Causal Inference and Statistical Best Practices with Experimental data (January 31<sup>st</sup>)*

Imai, Kosuke, Gary King, and Clayton Nall. (2009). The Essential Role of Pair Matching in Cluster-Randomized Experiments, with Application to the Mexican Universal Health Insurance Evaluation" (with discussions and rejoinder), *Statistical Science*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (February), pp. 29-53.

Kosuke Imai, Luke Keele, Dustin Tingley and Teppei Yamamoto "Unpacking the Black Box of Causality: Learning about Causal Mechanisms from Experimental and Observational Data", 2011, *American Political Science Review*, 105(4), pp. 765-789, with

Sylvain Chassang, Gerard Padro i Miquel and Erik Snowberg *Selective Trials: A Principal-Agent Approach to Randomized Controlled Experiment*, forthcoming, American Economic Review

### **Recommended**

Morton/Williams Chapter 3 “The Causal Inference Problem and the Rubin Causal Model” and Chapter 4 “Controlling Observables and Unobservables”

“Experimental Designs for Identifying Causal Mechanisms”, forthcoming, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series A*, selected for reading by the Royal Statistical Society, with Kosuke Imai and Teppei Yamamoto

Bullock, John G., Donald P. Green, and Shang E. Ha. 2010. “Yes, But What’s the Mechanism? (Don’t Expect an Easy Answer)”. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 98 (April): 550-58.

Wantchekon, Leonard and Jenny Guardardo, 2011, Methodology Update: Randomized Controlled Trials, Structural Models and the Study of Politics, *Journal of African Economies*, 20 (4) pp 653-672

Ho, Daniel E. and Kosuke Imai. (2006). “Randomization Inference With Natural Experiments: An Analysis of Ballot Effects in the 2003 California Recall Election.” *Journal of the American Statistical Association*

Rosenbaum, Paul, 2002, *Observational Studies* (Springer Series in Statistics)

Bowers, Jake and Ben Hansen 2008, “Covariate balance in simple, stratified and clustered comparative studies.” *Statistical Science*.23(2)219-236

Bowers, Jake and Panagopoulos, Costas, 2011, Fisher’s randomization mode of statistical inference, then and now. <http://www.jakebowers.org/PAPERS/BowPan-Fisher.pdf>

## **Part 2: Types of Experiments in Political Science**

*Week 3: Laboratory Experiments (February 7<sup>th</sup>)*

Meet in Harvard Decision Science Laboratory (<http://decisionlab.harvard.edu/>)

Morton and Williams Chapter 7 (Validity and Experimental Manipulations)

Falk, Armin and James J. Heckman, “Lab Experiments Are a Major Source of Knowledge in the Social Sciences”. *Science* 23 October 2009: 326 (5952), 535-538.  
<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/326/5952/535.abstract>

Rosnow, Ralph L. and Robert Rosenthal. 1997. *People Studying People: Artifacts and Ethics in Behavioral Research*. New York: Freeman and Company. (chapters 1-4).

MacKuen, Michael, Jennifer Wolak, Luke Keele, and George E. Marcus. 2010. "Civic Engagements: Resolute Partisanship or Reflective Deliberation". *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (2): pp. 440-458.

Fudenberg D, Rand DG, Dreber A (In press) Slow to Anger and Fast to Forgive: Cooperation in an Uncertain World. *American Economic Review*.

Horton JJ, Rand DG, Zeckhauser RJ (2011) The Online Laboratory: Conducting Experiments in a Real Labor Market. *Experimental Economics* 14 399-425.

Sears, David O. "College sophomores in the laboratory: Influences of a narrow data base on social psychology's view of human nature". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 51(3), Sep 1986, 515-530.

### **Recommended**

Handbook chapter 5: Economics versus Psychology Experiments: Stylization, Incentives, and Deception (Eric Dickson)

Handbook chapter 4: Students as Experimental Participants: A Defense of the "Narrow Data Base" (James Druckman and Cindy D. Kam)

Cohen, Geoffrey L. 2003. "Party Over Policy: The Dominating Impact of Group Influence on Political Beliefs". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol. 85, No. 5, 808–822

### *Week 4: Survey Experiments (February 14<sup>th</sup>)*

Tomz, Mike 2007 Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations: An Experimental Approach. *International Organization* 61, no. 4: 821–40.

Tomz, Mike, and van Houweling, Robert, 2009, The Electoral Implications of Candidate Ambiguity *American Political Science Review* 103, no. 1: 83–98.

Hainmueller, J. and Hiscox, M. J. (2010). Attitudes toward highly skilled and low-skilled immigration: Evidence from a survey experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 104(01), 61–84.

Healy, Andrew J., Neil Malhotra, and Cecilia Hyunjung Mo. "Irrelevant events affect voters' evaluations of government performance", *PNAS* July 20, 2010 vol. 107 no. 29 12804-12809

Prior, Markus and Arthur Lupia (2008). Money, Time, and Political Knowledge: Distinguishing Quick Recall and Political Learning Skills. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52 (1): 168-182.

Berinsky, Adam J., Gregory A. Huber, and Gabriel S. Lenz. "Using Mechanical Turk as a Subject Recruitment Tool for Experimental Research". Forthcoming, *Political Analysis*

Trager, Robert F. Trager and Lynn Vavreck. 2011. "The Political Costs of Crisis Bargaining: Presidential Rhetoric and the Role of Party". *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (3) 526-545.

### **Recommended**

Tomz, Mike and Robert Van Houweling Candidate Positioning and Voter Choice. *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 3 (August 2008): 303–18.

Tingley, Dustin and Tomz, Mike, 2012, Conditional Cooperation, International Organizations, and Climate Change, working paper

Jamie Druckman and Rose McDermott "Emotion and the Framing of Risky Choice," with, *Political Behavior* 30: 297-321, 2008

Dennis Chong and Jamie Druckman "Framing Theory," with, *Annual Review of Political Science* 10: 103-126, 2007

Glynn, Adam. 2010. "What Can We Learn with Statistical Truth Serum? Design and Analysis of the List Experiment". Working paper, Harvard University.

Blair, Graeme and Kosuke Imai. 2012. "Statistical Analysis of List Experiments." *Political Analysis*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Winter), pp. 47-77.

*Week 5: Field Experiments (February 21<sup>st</sup>)*

Paluck, Elizabeth.Levy. (2009). "Reducing intergroup prejudice and conflict using the media: A field experiment in Rwanda." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 574-587

Butler, Daniel M., and David E. Broockman. 2011. "Do Politicians Racially Discriminate against Constituents? A Field Experiment on State Legislators." *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (3): 463-477.

Gerber, Alan, Greg Huber, and Ebonya Washington. 2010 "Party Affiliation, Partisanship, and Political Beliefs: A Field Experiment". *American Political Science Review* (November).

Gerber, Alan, Dean Karlan and Daniel Bergan. 2009. "Does the Media Matter? A Field Experiment Measuring the Effect of Newspapers on Voting Behavior and Political Opinions". 2009. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* (January).

### **Recommended**

Wanchekon, Leonard, Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin, 2003, *World Politics*, Vol. 55, pp.399-422

Alvareza, R. Michael, Asa Hopkins, and Betsy Sinclair. 2010. "Mobilizing Pasadena Democrats: Measuring The Effects of Partisan Campaign Contacts". *The Journal of Politics* 72, 31-44.

Gay, Claudine. 2011. "Moving to Opportunity: The Political Effects of a Housing Mobility Experiment". *Urban Affairs Review*.

Addonizio, Elizabeth M., Donald P. Green and James M. Glaser. 2007. "Putting the Party Back into Politics: An Experiment Testing Whether Election Day Festivals Increase Voter Turnout". *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40, pp 721-727.

*Week 6: Natural Experiments (February 28<sup>th</sup>)*

Enos, Ryan D. "What tearing down public housing projects teaches us about the effect of racial threat on political participation". Working paper.

Elis, Roy, Neil Malhotra, and March Meredith. 2009. "Apportionment Cycles as Natural Experiments". *Political Analysis* 17 (4). 341-357.

Robinson, Gregory, John E. McNutty, and Jonathan S. Krasno. 2009 "Observing the Counterfactual? The search for political experiments in nature". *Political Analysis* 17 (4). 358-376.

Atkinson, Matthew and Anthony Fowler. "Social Capital and Voter Turnout: Evidence from Saint's Day Fiestas in Mexico" Working paper.

Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98 (4): pp. 529-545.

### **Recommended**

Washington, Ebonya. 2008. "Female Socialization: How Daughters Affect Their Legislator Fathers' Voting on Women's Issues," *American Economic Review*, 98 (1), 311-332.

Deaton, Angus, 2010, Instruments, Randomization, and Learning about Development, *Journal of Economic Literature*, 48(2), 424-455.

Bernard Fraga and Eitan Hersh (2011) "Voting Costs and Voter Turnout in Competitive Elections", *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 5 (4) 339-356.

Andreas Madestam† and David Yanagizawa-Drott. 2011. "Political Preferences and Behavior in the United States". Working Paper.

*Week 7: No class. Meetings with Enos/Tingley to discuss research projects (March 6<sup>th</sup>)*

*March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting: spring break (class convenes in Ibiza)*

*Week 8: The role of ethics in experimentation (March 20<sup>th</sup>)*

Milgram, Stanley. 2010 (1977). "Subject Reaction: The Neglected Factor in the Ethics of Experimentation", in *The Individual in the Social World*, Thomas Blass (ed), Padstow, Great Britain: TJ International Ltd. 166-174.

<http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/20110912Ethics.pdf>

David Nickerson, 2011, "When the Client Owns the Data"

<http://scholar.harvard.edu/sites/scholar.iq.harvard.edu/files/dtingley/files/fall2011.pdf>

Morton/Williams Chapter 12 (Ethics) and 13 (Deception)

### **Part 3: Topical Applications of Experiments in Political Science**

*Week 9: Voting (March 27<sup>th</sup>)*

Marco Battaglini, Rebecca Morton, and Thomas Palfrey, 2010, "The Swing Voter's Curse in the Laboratory," *Review of Economic Studies*, Issue 1, pages 61-89.

Gailmard, Sean, Tim Feddersen and Alvaro Sandroni, 2009, Moral Bias in Large Elections: Theory and Experimental Evidence, *American Political Science Review*, 103(2), 175-192

Enos, Ryan D. and Anthony Fowler. "Does Electoral Competition Mobilize Underrepresented Citizens? Evidence from a Field Experiment in the Aftermath of a Tied Election". Working paper.

Sondheimer, Rachel Milstein, and Donald P. Green. 2010. Using Experiments to Estimate the Effects of Education on Voter Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science* 54(1): 174-189.

Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review* 102(1): 33-48.

Huber, Gregory A., Seth J. Hill, and Gabriel S. Lenz. "Sources of Bias in Retrospective Decision-Making: Experimental Evidence on Voters' Limitations in Controlling Incumbents." Working paper.

### **Recommended**

Nickerson, David. 2010. "Is Voting Contagious? Evidence from Two Field Experiments". *American Political Science Review* 102 (1) 49-57.

Krasno, Jonathan S. and Donald P. Green. 2008. "Do Televised Presidential Ads Increase Voter Turnout? Evidence from a Natural Experiment". *The Journal of Politics* 70, 245-261.

Gerber , Alan and Todd Rogers. 2009. "Descriptive Social Norms and Motivation to Vote: Everybody's Voting and so Should You". *The Journal of Politics* 71. 178-191.

Kousser , Thad and Megan Mullin. 2007. "Does Voting by Mail Increase Participation? Using Matching to Analyze a Natural Experiment", *Political Analysis* 15 (4). 428-445.

Green, Donald P. and Lynn Vavreck. 2008. "Analysis of Cluster-Randomized Experiments: A Comparison of Alternative Estimation Approaches" *Political Analysis* 16 (2). 138-152.

Gerber , Alan S., Donald P. Green, Edward Kaplan, and Holger Kern. 2010. "Baseline, Placebo, and Treatment: Efficient Estimation for Three-Group Experiments". *Political Analysis* 18 (3). 297-315.

*Week 10: Bargaining and Public Goods (April 3rd)*

Ostrom, Eleanor, James Walker and Roy Gardner ["Covenants With and Without a Sword: Self-Governance is Possible"](#) *American Political Science Review* 86(2) (June 1992): 404–17

T. K. Ahn, Ostrom, Eleanor, James Walker ["A Common-Pool Resource Experiment with Postgraduate Subjects from 41 Countries"](#) *Ecological Economics* 69(12) (October 2010): 2624–33.

Rand, David, Arbesman S, Christakis NA (2011) Dynamic networks promote cooperation in experiments with humans. PNAS. doi:10.1073/pnas.1108243108

Rand, David, Nowak MA. (2011) The evolution of antisocial punishment in optional public goods games. Nature Communications. 2, 434.

Tingley, Dustin "The Dark Side of the Future: An Experimental Test of Commitment Problems in Bargaining", 2011, *International Studies Quarterly*, 55, pp. 521-544



Rose McDermott, Dustin Tingley, Jonathan Cowden, Giovanni Frazzetto, and Dominic Johnson, 2009, "Monoamine oxidase A gene (MAOA) predicts behavioral aggression following provocation", *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 106(7), 2118-2123

Dickson, Eric, 2009 [Do Participants and Observers Assess Intentions Differently During Bargaining and Conflict? An Experiment.](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20647958) *American Journal of Political Science* 53(4), 910-930. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20647958>

## **Recommended**

Marco Battaglini and Uliana Makarov, Cheap Talk with Multiple Audiences: An Experimental Analysis, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1789794](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1789794)

Dickson, Eric S. "Leadership, Followership, and Beliefs about the World: An Experiment." *British Journal of Political Science*, forthcoming

Dickson, Eric S., Sanford C. Gordon, and Gregory A. Huber. "Enforcement and Compliance in an Uncertain World: An Experimental Investigation." *Journal of Politics* 71(4):1357-1378 (2009)

Clark, David, Timothy Nordstrom, Katri Sieberg, William Reed, Charles Holt, "Some Experimental Results for a Quantal Response Bargaining Model of War"  
[http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1643267](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1643267)

*Week 11: Development (April 10th)*

Handbook Chapter 27 "Experimental Research on Democracy and Development" (Leonard Wantchekon and Ana de la O)

Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy Weinstein, 2009, Field Experiments and the Political Economy of Development, *Annual Review of Political Science*,  
[http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/HW\\_ARPS09.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/HW_ARPS09.pdf)

Raghobendra Chattopadhyay and Esther Duflo. 2004. "Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India". *Econometrica* 72 (5), 1409-1443.

James Habyarimana, Macartan Humphreys, Dan Posner and Jeremy Weinstein. "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision? An Experimental Approach." *American Political Science Review* 101.04 (2007): 709-725.

Olken, Benjamin A. 2010. "Direct Democracy and Local Public Goods: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia". *American Political Science Review* 104 (2), 243-267.

Olken, Benjamin A. 2007." Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia". *Journal of Political Economy* 115 (2), 200-249.

## **Recommended**

<http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/aer2009.pdf>

**Part 4: Research Presentations**

Week 12: Presentations part 1 (April 17<sup>th</sup>)

Week 13: Presentations part 2 (April 24<sup>th</sup>)