

**The Pennsylvania State University
Departments of Political Science and Sociology**

**PLSC/SOC 497
Research Fellowship in Political Science/Sociology
Professors Frank Baumgartner and John McCarthy
Spring 2006
Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30PM, 111 Sacket**

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This course will focus on developing research skills in political science and sociology. Students will become involved in hands-on individualized research projects dealing with changes in public policy and the development and growth of interest groups and social movement organizations (SMOs). Readings will focus on articles from the recent professional literature on the growth of interest groups and SMOs as well as on theories and indicators of policy change over time. Using data from the Policy Agendas Project (www.policyagendas.org), and supplementing these with new sources on social movements and newspaper coverage, each student will learn to develop an individual research project linking a social movement, professional or business community of their choice with developments in public policy over the past 50 years.

This class will be run partly as a seminar and partly as a workshop. The first part of each weekly meeting will be a seminar, with extensive class participation and discussion of readings. The second part will be a workshop, with students reporting on their research projects or working hands-on with data questions and exercises. Assignments are all structured in such a manner as to walk each student through the necessary skills and steps so that their final project will be both feasible and professional. We hope you can use your final presentation (or a paper drawn from it) as a writing sample for graduate school or for other similar purposes.

We'll spend some time most weeks discussing various research methodology issues, such as how one knows whether a given social indicator is valid and reliable. We'll focus on indicators of public policy and concerning the development of social movements and interest groups. You'll gain an understanding of some on-going research projects here on campus. You'll each write an original presentation and term paper making use of your own research. You will get an inside understanding of the data and measurement issues relating to the Policy Agendas Project and in particular our ongoing research project concerning creating a longitudinal database from the annual volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Associations*. This lists voluntary associations of all types active at the national level in the US since 1956.

Since each student will be researching a different topic, but using similar methodologies during the term, there is a premium upon students helping one another. Class discussions will provide a time to explain your own research projects as well as to get feedback from others. By the same token, helping other students in their research projects, through constructive criticisms and suggestions is an integral part of the class. Accordingly, when one student makes a presentation to the class, the other students should be ready to give feedback and help. This is not a class in which to sit quietly.

The major assignments in the class are: 1) active participation in both the seminar and workshop sessions; 2) a professional-style computer-based presentation of about 20 minutes of your research; and 3) a term paper. Term papers should combine original research using the resources from the Agendas Project, additional data sources as needed for your particular project, and substantial library work as well. There is no single requirement for the term paper, but roughly speaking we would expect a minimum of 15 pages (double spaced) of text as well as the relevant accompanying tables and figures in an appendix.

Grades will be calculated in the following manner:

20%	Class Participation (Note: 30 % is the equivalent of three full letter grades)
25%	Total for various short assignments due throughout the semester
25%	Final Presentation
30%	Term Paper

100% Total

There are no required textbooks for purchase. The course web site, available through Baumgartner's home page (<http://polisci.la.psu.edu/faculty/Baumgartner/welcome.htm#teach>) will contain links to all the relevant articles, web sites, and data sources. Any papers not available on the web site will be distributed in class.

As this class will be a seminar, participation is fundamental. This means preparing for class by doing the readings ahead of time and coming prepared with questions is part of the assignment. Occasionally, students may be ill or not be able to attend class. However, excessive missing of class or doing the work off schedule will not be tolerated as it is not fair to the other students. We will walk you through, step by step, the process of constructing an original research project in this class. It has to be done on a tight schedule, and we will take deadlines seriously.

The following information comes from the Political Science Department. We encourage you to ask questions about any parts of it that are not clear.

Academic Dishonesty¹

The Departments of Political Science and Sociology, along with the College of the Liberal Arts and the University, take violations of academic dishonesty seriously. Observing basic honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless an instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. In an examination setting, unless the instructor gives explicit prior instructions to the contrary, whether the examination is in-class or take-home, violations of academic integrity shall consist of any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids, or from any person or papers or electronic devices, or of any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his or her own work or not.

Other violations include, but are not limited to, any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in regard to an examination, such as tampering with a graded exam or claiming another's work to be one's own. Violations shall also consist of obtaining or attempting to obtain, previous to any examinations, copies of the examination papers or the questions to appear thereon, or to obtain any illegal knowledge of these questions. Lying to the instructor or purposely misleading any Penn State administrator shall also constitute a violation of academic integrity.

In cases of a violation of academic integrity it is the policy of the Department of Political Science to impose appropriate penalties that are consistent with University guidelines.

¹Much of the text above has been directly obtained from the sections of the Princeton University website <http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/rrr/99/pages/OI.htm> concerning academic integrity (Rights, Rules, Responsibilities introductory text as well as pages 55-69) as well as from the website of the Department of Economics at The Pennsylvania State University.

Disabilities

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made for all students with disabilities, but it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor early in the term. Do not wait until just before an exam to decide you want to inform the instructor of a learning disability; any accommodations for disabilities must be arranged well in advance.

Weekly class assignments, readings, and discussion topics

Week 1, January 10, 2006: Introduction and Course Overview

1. General overview of the course
2. Organizations as Collective Actors, Policy Agendas and Mediation: Alternative Models.
3. Presentation of Power Point Presentations from previous semesters.
4. Measurement issues

Assignment (due next week): Go through the topic codebook at www.policyagendas.org and think seriously about policy issues that interest you for a potential term paper. Be prepared to discuss next week in class.

Week 2, January 17: Studying Media Attention Cycles

Seminar:

1. Discussion of using media archives for creating time-series of media attention to policy issues. What produces media attention cycles?
2. Readings:
 - Hilgartner, Stephen and Charles L. Bosk. 1988. The Rise and Fall of Social Problems—A Public Arenas Model. *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 53-78.
 - Woolley, J. T. 2000. Using Media-Based Data in Studies of Politics. *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 156-173.

Workshop:

1. Review of www.policyagendas.org and NYT electronic search resources in class. Be prepared to discuss your potential topic.

Assignment (due next week):

- Create an annual time series of media attention to some issue of your choice using the Electronic *New York Times* Historical Archive.

Week 3, January 24: Studying Policy Agendas

Seminar:

1. Overview of Policy Agendas Project and Encyclopedia of Associations project.
2. Readings:
 - Baumgartner, Frank R., Bryan D. Jones, and John Wilkerson. 2002. Studying Policy Dynamics. Chapter 2 (pp. 29-49) in *Policy Dynamics*. Ed. Bryan D. Jones and Frank R. Baumgartner. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 - Baumgartner, Frank R. 2005. The Growth and Diversity of US Associations, 1956–2004: Analyzing Trends using the *Encyclopedia of Associations*. Working paper. March 29.

Workshop:

1. Review experiences in creating media attention time series.
2. Try to recreate these searches as closely as possible using the policy agendas site. This may lead you to revise your topic slightly.

Assignment (due next week):

- Use the Policy Agendas web site to create a time-series of government attention to some issue of your choice. Most efficiently this should be the same issue chosen for creating the media attention time-series. Then revise the media attention time-series

to correspond as closely as possible to the government attention time-series. Come to class next week with both series graphed and with your and codebook data saved.

Week 4, January 31: First Round of Presentations and Peer Comments

Workshop only today:

1. Present your findings with a first draft of your computer-based presentations.
 - a. Explain the topic, how you define the policy.
 - b. Show graphs of relevant indicators: NYTimes, Agendas, others.
 - c. Give at least 3 quality bibliographic references, even if you have not read these yet. These will allow you later to learn more qualitative information about the history of the policy or social movement area you are studying.
2. Participate in the discussion about the presentation of each of your colleagues.

Week 5, February 7: Studying Populations of Organizations over Time.

Seminar:

1. Readings:
 - Singh, Jitendra V. and Charles J. Lumsden. 1990. Theory and Research in Organizational Ecology. *Annual Review of Sociology* 16: 161-195.
 - Johnson, Erik and John D. McCarthy. 2005. "The Sequencing of Transnational and National Social Movement Mobilization: The Organizational Mobilization of the Global and U.S. Environmental Movements." Pp. 71-94 in *Transnational Protest and Global Activism*. Sidney Tarrow and Donatella Della Porta, eds. Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield.

Workshop:

- Discuss the measurements of key variables and the sources of the data used in the Johnson and McCarthy paper. Use the Neuman reading below on measurement theory for concepts and vocabulary to know how we discuss measurement in general. Pay attention to questions of reliability and validity.
- W. Lawrence Neuman. 2000. *Social Research Methods* 7th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. Chapter 7. Qualitative and Quantitative Measurement. Pp. 156–94.

Assignment (due next week):

- Create an annual time series of founding and density for a sub-set of organizations using the Associations Unlimited on-line listing of national level U.S. associations. Try to have these time series converge with the media attention and government attention time-series you have already created. Come to class with your dataset, a graph or graphs, and a codebook description of what you did.

Week 6, February 14: The Founding of Social Movement Organizations/Interest Groups.

Seminar:

1. Readings:
 - McCammon, Holly J. 2000. Stirring Up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of the State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914. *Social Forces* 80: 449-480.
 - Minkoff, Debra C. 1995. Interorganizational Influences on the Founding of African-American Organizations, 1955-1985. *Sociological Forum* 10: 51-79.

- Assignment (due in class): write a one-page paper on one of these two articles reviewing the measurement of key variables and the sources of the data.

Workshop:

1. Review experiences in creating annual time series of founding and density for populations of associations. Present what you found; bring graphs.
2. Discuss measurement issues in the articles presented for reading today.

Week 7, February 21: The Survival of Social Movement Organizations

Seminar:

1. Readings:
 - Edwards, Bob, and Sam Marullo. 1995. Organizational Mortality in a Declining Social Movement: The Demise of Peace Movement Organizations in the End of the Cold War Era. *American Sociological Review* 60: 908-927.
 - Hannan, Michael. 1988. The Ecology of Organizational Mortality: American Labor Unions, 1836-1985. *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 25-52.
 - Martin, Andrew W., Frank R. Baumgartner, and John McCarthy. Forthcoming, 2006. Measuring Association Populations Using the *Encyclopedia of Associations*: Evidence from the Field of Labor Unions. *Social Science Research*.
 - Review the measurement of key variables and the sources of the data in the Edwards or Hannan articles above.

Workshop:

1. Informal presentations of your progress on term paper projects, especially bibliography.

Week 8, February 28: Second Round of Presentations

Workshop only today:

1. Same format as last time. Report on where you stand. You should already have much of the quantitative material available. Present what you have and explain what remains to come. Also give an overview of the qualitative / historical material you have and your most important bibliographical references.
2. Participate in the discussion about the presentation of each of your colleagues.

(Week of March 7, Spring Break)**Week 9, March 14: The Policy Impact of SMOs and Protest**

Seminar:

1. Readings:
 - McAdam, Doug and Yang Su. 2002. The War at Home: Anti-War Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965 to 1973. *American Sociological Review* 67: 722-746.
 - Johnson, Erik, Jon Argone and John D. McCarthy. 2006. Assessing Political Outcomes of Social Movement Mobilization: The Environmental Movement, Political Agendas and Laws. Paper to be delivered at the 2006 Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association. Montreal, Canada.
 - Baumgartner, Frank R., Suzanna De Boef, and Amber E. Boydston. 2005. Issue-Definition and Policy Change: Capital Punishment and the Rise of the "Innocence Frame," 1960-2003. Working paper. December 7.
 - Review the measurement of key variables and the sources of the data.

Workshop:

1. Qualitative presentations of the bibliographic and non-quantitative historical material concerning your project. This would include a chronology of major events and your most important bibliographic references.

Week 10, March 21: The Co-Evolution of Government and Groups.

Seminar:

1. Readings:
 - Beth L. Leech, Frank R. Baumgartner, Timothy La Pira, and Nicholas A. Semanko. 2005. Drawing Lobbyists to Washington: Government Activity and the Demand for Advocacy. *Political Research Quarterly* 58, 1 (March): 19–30.
 - Baumgartner, Frank R. and Christine Mahoney. Social Movements, the Rise of New Issues, and the Public Agenda. In David S. Meyer, Valerie Jenness, and Helen Ingram, eds., *Routing the Opposition: Social Movements, Public Policy, and Democracy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005, pp. 65–86.

Workshop:

1. Compare the development of government interest in the policy area you are focusing on with the development of the associated interest-group or SMO system. Bring relevant charts and figures to class and be prepared to show and discuss.

Week 11, March 28: Third Round of Presentations

These presentations should be purely qualitative, focusing only on the chronologies of your policy histories and the bibliographic material, showing how the quantitative research you have done corresponds with more qualitative treatments from the literature and reconstructing a chronology of the history.

Week 12, April 4: Final Student Presentations, group 1.

After you present your final presentation, you can still revise it before it is due on April 25. Most important, use the feedback you get on the presentation to complete your term paper.

Week 13, April 11: Final Student Presentations, group 2.**Week 14, April 18:** Final Student Presentations, group 3.**Week 15, April 25:** No class today.

Term papers due today. Give one paper copy to McCarthy at his office and send an electronic copy of both the term paper and your revised and final PPT presentation by email to both instructors. All are due by the normal class time.