

INTL-I 315

Research Design in International Studies

Course N^o: 4950 / TuTh 8:00 – 9:15 @ GA 0003

Prof.: Rashid Carlos Jamil Marcano Rivera
Office: GA 1023
Office Hours: Tues. & Thur. 10:00-12:00
Wed. 10-11 (Zoom, only via prior appointment)
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Course Description

I-315 provides a foundation for understanding and conducting social science research. This course will guide you through each of these stages, teaching you how to gather and analyse data, interpret findings, and navigate the theoretical, methodological, and ethical challenges that may emerge. We will begin by addressing core concepts and issues that cut across methods, including theories of causality, sampling, measurement, and ethics. We will then focus on seven methodological approaches, including experiments, case studies, ethnography and in-depth interviews, archival research and content analysis, surveys, statistical inference, and multi-method approaches. Our coverage will not provide in-depth training in any particular method, but instead will focus on understanding the advantages and disadvantages of different techniques and matching methods appropriately to research questions. To provide a thematic grounding to the course and most of the examples used to further understanding of the research design and implementation process, we will read and interact with research on the topic of democratic erosion.

Course Requirements

Grades will be based on five major components. The contribution of these requirements to final course grades is as follows:

(Almost) Weekly quizzes	10%
Small group work	10%
Voter education assignment	5%
Community participation assignment	5%
Research design assignments	20%
Midterm	20%
Cumulative final	30%

Required text and course materials

The required book for this class is

- *The Process of Social Research*, 3rd Ed., by **Dixon, Singleton and Straits** (2022).

Required course materials: All other materials for this course will be available on Canvas or through [OneSearch@IU](#). Assignments and quizzes will be submitted on Canvas, so you will need access to a computer and a word processor such as Word or \LaTeX . You can find computers with these programs at any of the Student Technology Centers (STCs) or use online editing sites like [Overleaf](#).

Office hours

Office hours are scheduled to take place after this course, with some buffer time. To ensure I can address your specific questions and accommodate everyone, I highly recommend scheduling an appointment in advance using [this link](#). Once an appointment slot is booked by a student, it will no longer be available. If you cannot find a suitable time slot, please email me to explore alternative arrangements. If you ever need to cancel a booked appointment, inform me via email as soon as possible. Additionally, I offer extra office hours on Wednesdays, exclusively held over Zoom, and *only* by previous appointment.

Weekly Course Outline

Week	Date	Discussion Topic
1	9 Jan	Introduction
2	16 Jan	Introduction continued, democratic erosion
3	23 Jan	Concepts of research design
4	30 Jan	Reading and writing in social science
5	6 Feb	Research ethics
6	13 Feb	Measurement
7	20 Feb	Sampling
8	27 Feb	Review and Midterm
9	5 Mar	Surveys
10	12 Mar	<i>Spring Break</i>
11	19 Mar	Ethnography and in-depth interviews
12	26 Mar	Archival research and content analysis
13	2 Apr	Comparative case studies
14	9 Apr	Data analysis
15	16 Apr	Multiple/Mixed methods
16	23 Apr	Conclusion
17	30 Apr	Final exam week

Disability-Related and Special Accommodations

Please let me know at the start of the semester, by the third week at the latest, whether you require special accommodations. Note that the Disability Services for Students (DSS) Office requires that you take proactive actions to devise a plan at the start of the semester that meets your needs. If you are not already registered with DSS, and think that you may need their assistance, please see the [DSS website](#) for more information and to talk to an advisor if you need guidance formulating your plan. I am here to help you complete this course successfully. Please make it a point to seek assistance as soon as you experience any problems. But if your enrolment and/or performance in class is affected by extracurricular circumstances, I ask that you first contact the [Student Advocates Office \(SAO\)](#) at 855-0761 to explain your situation. SAO staff can help you assess your options and contact instructors on your behalf in order to protect your privacy. Please note that any petitions for special accommodations will only be considered if they are consistent with University regulations; yet another reason to work with SAO directly.

Grading specifics

The components upon which you will be graded in this course are described as follows:

(Almost) Weekly quizzes – 10%

Most Tuesdays, we will begin class with a short quiz administered on Canvas (a mixture of multiple choice and short answer. Quizzes will be aimed at ensuring you are keeping up with the course material and doing the readings. I will drop your two lowest quiz scores. Quizzes also include the Syllabus Quiz, which is due Thursday, 11 January at 11:59pm. You need to complete this quiz in order to “unlock” attending my office hours and being able to ask me clarifying questions over email. You can only take the quiz if you are in class, so this also operates as a way to reward class attendance and participation.

Small group work – 10%

On Thursdays, class time will be focused on applied group work that will be graded on an outstanding (96%), satisfactory (86%), and unsatisfactory basis (50%). I will drop your two lowest small group work scores.

Voter education assignment – 5%

Voting happens more than once every four years. To encourage civic participation, students will research the upcoming election in their place of residence, who is on the ballot, and the rules around voting (including how to register to vote). Students who are ineligible to vote in the United States will have the option to either find comparable information for voting in their country of citizenship, or to complete the assignment as if they were eligible to vote based on their residential address. Due Friday, 23 February 2024 at 11:59pm.

Community participation assignment – 5%

To encourage students to participate in academic-related programming that HLS will organize throughout the semester, students are required to attend five University-sanctioned in person or virtual events over the course of the semester (or, equivalent events at other universities, think tanks, etc.). You may choose which events to attend, but they must have an academic component. For each event, please submit an event attendance form, available on Canvas. You must submit your attendance form within one week of the event in order to receive credit. If you are unsure whether a particular event would or would not count toward this assignment, please ask. If you face barriers to completing this assignment, please let me know by Tuesday, 23 January 2024 so that we can find an alternative arrangement.

Research design assignments – 20%

This consists of research question, annotated bibliography, research proposal and design. Deadlines are provided below, but span through the term. Details on assignments will be provided during lectures and in the assignment information.

Library Resources Extra credit quiz – 2%

As a way to assess your learning of the module crafted for this course with the International Studies librarian, Charmaine Henriques, an extra credit two-point quiz will be made available from Week 4, and will be due on 26 April 2024. The module, for the purposes of this class, was divided in pieces that were conveniently around topics covered in class for students,

Midterm and Cumulative Final – 50%

There will be one midterm exam and one cumulative final exam. Both are take-home.

- Midterm – 20% Due Thursday, 29 February 2024 at 11:59p.
- Cumulative final – 30% Due Thursday, 2 May 2024 at 11:59p.

Classroom Policies

The following is not an exhaustive list of all applicable classroom policies. Beyond the stated policies below, this class will be governed by university regulations and expectations regarding academic affairs and academic integrity. If you are not familiar with these requirements, please review the [Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct](#).

Method of instruction

This course is designated for in-person instruction. We will reassess the need for virtual options if necessary.

Course participation

Teaching and learning today can be challenging for a variety of distractions and potential disruptive events (e.g. COVID). I expect students will take the course seriously and come to class unless they really cannot attend. You will have weekly assignments to ensure that you do not fall behind. Please take advantage of my accessibility via email, weekly in person and virtual office hours. Learning happens best in community, so the more you participate, the more you will get out of the course.

Still, these are not normal times. Because of continued variants, it is very possible that students will fall ill with COVID or have care-taking responsibilities for someone with COVID or some other illness at some point during this semester. If you are struggling to meet the basic participation requirements for this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can develop an alternative arrangement that allows you to fulfil the course requirements. Note that attendance is mandatory, and I will not issue excuses for lack of attendance (coming to class is essential for learning and contributing to the group). What I will do is work with students who face obstacles to attendance to make sure that they are able to fully participate in the rest of the course so that their lack of attendance does not prevent them from earning points in the other categories of learning assessment used in this course.

The majority of your interpersonal interactions in this course will happen in peer groups. You may find that the research examples you discuss generate heated debate. Respectful and constructive disagreement is fast becoming a lost art. Following these four simple rules will help ensure all students are respected, that ideas and beliefs are constructively challenged, and that you will leave this course better prepared to engage in critical conversations than most people:

- Frame disagreements as debates rather than conflicts.
- Argue as if you are right, but listen as if you are wrong.
- Make the most respectful interpretation of the other person's perspective
- Acknowledge where you agree with others and what you have learned from peers with whom you have a different perspective

Attendance and Absences

Please prioritize class attendance, and please let me know ASAP if you have extenuating circumstances that make it challenging to attend class. *COVID note - while IU has determined that the Spring 2024 will be held in person and in a normal environment, multiple variants continue to generate a small percentage of break-through infections. If you have a fever and/or are experiencing symptoms of COVID, please do not come to class and instead go to IU healthcare to receive a COVID test. Please contact me ASAP if you are ill OR if you need to self-isolate. We will work something out, but you will have to contact me proactively and complete alternative assignments to "make up" for class sessions missed.*

Attendance is not graded per se, but indirectly via quizzes and group assignments. If there are anticipated absences due to *religious observations* (please submit the request form [request for](#)

[accommodation for religious observances](#) no later than two weeks prior to the anticipated absence.) or *personal and family emergencies*, let me know to assign an alternate due date or assignment if possible. In the case of emergencies, you must submit appropriate documentation to the professor.

Final grade calculation

Please note that this course is not graded on a curve. Your course grade is entirely up to you, depending on your overall performance.

At the end of the semester, the sum of your total number of regular plus any earned extra credit points will determine your final grade as follows (bold denotes a regular letter grade, without plus or minus):

	-	Regular	+
A range	89.5-92.4	92.5-96.4	96.5-100+
B range	79.5-82.4	82.5-86.4	86.5-89.4
C range	69.5-72.4	72.5-76.4	76.5-79.4
D range	59.5-62.4	62.5-66.4	66.5-69.4
F range		0-59.4	

For example, if your final cumulative score is 91, you will earn an A-. If you have a cumulative score of 95, you will earn an A. If you have a score of 97 or higher, you will get an A+. The same logic applies to lower grade ranges.

Late assignment policy

Students will lose a half-letter grade (5%) of the assignment in question for every day that an assignment is late, unless they have been granted an extension (after contacting me in advance or given extenuating circumstances).

Collaboration and Academic Honesty

An important component of any research project is academic integrity. Classroom exercises will sometimes involve group activities, reflecting the collaborative nature of many research projects. However, you are expected to complete all graded assignments on your own, including examinations. While some amount of collaboration such as group practices outside class time (e.g., study groups) are allowed in that they allow you to master the skills discussed in class, plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. I will respond to acts of academic misconduct according to university policy concerning plagiarism; sanctions for plagiarism can include a grade of F for the assignment in question and/or for the course, and must include a report to the Dean of Students Office. In addition to the explicit rule against plagiarism, this class is governed by university regulations and expectations regarding academic affairs and academic integrity. If you are not familiar with these requirements, please review the [“Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct”](#).

Selling the instructor's notes/study guides in this course is not permitted. Violations of this policy will be reported to the Dean of Students as academic misconduct (violation of course rules). Sanctions for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on the assignment for which the notes/study guides are being sold, a reduction in your final course grade, a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities. Additionally, you should know that selling a faculty member's notes/study guides individually or on behalf of one of commercial services using IU email, or via Canvas may also constitute a violation of IU information technology and IU intellectual property policies and additional consequences may result.

Incomplete grades

Per University policies, and in the interest of fairness to all students in the course, students who do not complete course requirements will receive an F in this course. If you think you have a situation that warrants an incomplete grade, please seek the assistance of the [Student Advocates Office \(SAO\)](#) so you can then submit a written petition to me by 9 March. In particular, please note that I will not consider requests to take an "I" grade if you realize late in the semester that you will be getting a low grade and want to retake the course in the future to get a higher grade. If you had performed at a satisfactory level during a majority of the course but did not complete all required work, we may then identify missing course requirements, assignments to be completed and set a deadline for their completion. In that time, you may not re-enrol in this course. At the end of that negotiated period, the "I" will be updated with a final grade, which will be "F" if no final grade was submitted after one year from the end of the term this course was taken (i.e. missing course requirements were not submitted in arranged period). If I refuse your request for an incomplete, you may appeal to the Department of International Studies chair, who may approve or deny your request after consulting with me about the reasons for refusal.

Cell Phones/Texting/Online Chats

Don't do it.

Student resources

Psychological services

The University is committed to continuing to support your mental health and well-being. The University's Counselling Services (CAPS) has resources to aid you in maintaining or creating new ways of navigating and coping with life stressors. If you are struggling, know that you do not have to do so alone and that there exist University services to help. The crisis line is available to students 24/7 by calling 812.855.5711 and choosing option 1. You can also schedule a 30-minute virtual visit with a counsellor by calling 812.855.5711.

Disability services

The University takes seriously its commitment to provide reasonable accommodations to promote learning among individuals with learning disabilities and physical handicaps. If any student will require assistance or academic accommodations for a disability, please contact me during my office hours, or by individual appointment. You must have established your eligibility for disability support services through the Office of Disability Services for Students in Wells Library W302, 812.855.7578.

Sexual assault and Title IX

As your instructor, one of my responsibilities is to create a positive learning environment for all students. Title IX and IU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibit sexual misconduct in any form, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and dating and domestic violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help. If you are seeking help and would like to speak to someone confidentially, you can make an appointment with:

- The Sexual Assault Crisis Services (SACS) at 812.855.8900 (counselling services)
- Confidential Victim Advocates (CVA) at 812.856.2469 (advocacy and advice services)
- IU Health Center at 812.855.4011 (health and medical services)

It is also important that you know that Title IX and University policy require me to share any information brought to my attention about potential sexual misconduct, with the campus Deputy Title IX Coordinator or IU's Title IX Coordinator. In that event, those individuals will work to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available. Protecting student privacy is paramount, and information will only be shared with those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist. To learn more, visit <https://stopsexualviolence.iu.edu/>.

Bias-based incident reporting

Bias-based incident reports can be made by students, faculty and staff. Any act of discrimination or harassment based on race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability can be reported through any of the options: 1) email incident@indiana.edu or fill out the [online referral](#); 2) call the Dean of Students Office at 812.855.8188 or the Assistant Dean for Student Support and Bias Education at 812.855.8187 3) use the IU mobile App (m.iu.edu). Reports can be made anonymously if desired.

Important dates

To prevent any misunderstanding about deadlines, here is a summary of important dates in chronological order:

<u>Required task</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Initial research question	9 th February
Voter education assignment	23 rd February
Midterm	29 th February
Annotated bibliography	22 nd March
Draft literature review	22 nd March
Refined research statement	12 th April
EC Quiz and Research design (final)	26 th April
Cumulative final	3 rd May

Course schedule

This syllabus is a flexible document. I will adhere to the schedule listed below as much as possible. However, the schedule and assigned readings are subject to change. Days when quizzes are to be conducted in class are marked as “dddd DD^q” (e.g. Tuesday 29^q).

Week - Assignments and readings

dd-dd M.

Week 1 - 11-13 Jan.	<u>Introduction</u>
<u>Tuesday 11:</u>	No readings for today. Syllabus and course introduction and overview.
<u>Thursday 13:</u>	Chapter 1 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . Syllabus quiz due by midnight.

Week 2 - 16-18 Jan.	<u>Introduction continued, democratic erosion</u>
<u>Tuesday 16^q:</u>	Ost (2016) . “Regime Change in Poland, Carried Out From Within”. Shifter (2016) “Nicaragua Is Turning Into a Real-Life ‘House of Cards’”.
	Sanz (2021) . “El Salvador isn’t a democracy anymore / Se acabó la democracia en El Salvador”.
<u>Thursday 18:</u>	Navia and Perelló (2021) . “It’s Not Just El Salvador. Democracies Are Weakening Across Central America.” Cheeseman (2017) . “How Zambia’s long-stable democracy ended up in a political crisis in 2017”.

Week 3 - 23-25 Jan. <u>Tuesday 23rd:</u> <u>Thursday 25:</u>	<u>Concepts of Research Design</u> Chapters 2 and 4 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2021) . The Global State of Democracy 2021 (HTML version) . Introduction, About the Report, Chapter 1-2 (pgs. vii-13). Alternatively, The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2023) The Global State of Democracy 2023 (HTML version)
Week 4 - 30 Jan.-1 Feb. <u>Tuesday 30th:</u> <u>Thursday 1:</u>	<u>Reading and Writing in Social Science</u> Chapter 14 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . Library and research resources, and literature reviews. An extra credit quiz will be available to take from the materials tailored for this class until 26 April 2024.
Week 5 - 6-9 Feb. <u>Tuesday 6th:</u> <u>Thursday 8:</u> <u>Friday 9:</u>	<u>Research Ethics</u> Chapter 3 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . Aschwanden and Koerth (2016) . “ How Two Grad Students Uncovered An Apparent Fraud ”. Johnson (2018) . “Protecting the Community: Lessons from the Montana Flyer Project” <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> , 51(3), 615-619. South African San Institute (2017) . “ San Code of Research Ethics ”. Initial Research Question assignment due 9 Feb. at 11:59p.
Week 6 - 13-15 Feb. <u>Tuesday 13th:</u> <u>Thursday 15:</u>	<u>Measurement</u> Chapter 5 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . Bermeo (2016) . “On Democratic Backsliding.” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 27(1): 5 – 19. Waldner and Lust (2018) . “Unwelcome Change: Coming to Terms with Democratic Backsliding”. <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 2018 21:1, 93-113.
Week 7 - 20-23 Feb. <u>Tuesday 20th:</u>	<u>Sampling</u> Chapter 6 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) .

Thursday 22: Pew Research Center's **Keeter, Kennedy and Deane (2020)**. **Understanding how 2020 election polls performed and what it might mean for other kinds of survey work**

Friday 23: Voter education assignment due 23 Feb. at 11:59p.

Week 8 -
27-29 Feb.

Review and Midterm

Tuesday 27th: Review. Midterm available from 5:00p.

Friday 29: Midterm due at 11:59p on Thursday, 29 Feb.

Week 9 -
5-7 Mar.

Surveys

Tuesday 5th: Chapter 8 from **Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022)**.

Thursday 7: **Carey et al. (2019)**. "Searching for Bright Lines in the Trump Presidency," *Perspectives on Politics* 17(9): 699-718.

Bright Line Watch (2023). **Uncharted Territory: The Aftermath of Presidential Indictments**

Week 10 -
12-14 Mar.

Spring Break

Tuesday 12: No class.

Thursday 14: No class.

Week 11 -
19-21 Mar.

Ethnography and in-depth interviews

Tuesday 19th: Chapter 9 from **Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022)**.

Thursday 21: **Cramer (2016)**. "The Politics of Resentment". University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1 & 2: Appendices A-C.

Friday 22: Annotated bibliography and draft literature review due at 11:59p.

Week 12 -
26 -28 Mar.

Archival Research and Content Analysis

Tuesday 26th: Chapter 10 from **Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022)** (skip section on Comparative Historical Analysis).

Thursday 28: **Maerz (2019)**. "Simulating Pluralism: The Language of Democracy in Hegemonic Authoritarianism", *Political Research Exchange* 1(1): 1-23.

Week 13 - 2-4 Apr. <u>Tuesday 2nd:</u> <u>Election Day.</u> <u>Thursday 4:</u>	<u>Comparative case studies</u> Chapter 10, pp. 334-343, from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . Mahoney (2007) "Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 40(2):122-144. Gamboa (2017) "Opposition at the Margins: Strategies Against the Erosion of Democracy in Colombia and Venezuela." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 49(4): 457– 477. Vaz Oliveira Aguiar and Fróes de Borja Reis (2023) . "Buen Vivir in Ecuador: Has the Constitutional Principle Been Reflected in Structural Change for Development?" <i>Brazilian Keynesian Review</i> , 9(1), 77-100.
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Week 14 - 9-12 Apr. <u>Tuesday 9th:</u> <u>Thursday 11:</u> <u>Friday 12:</u>	<u>Data analysis</u> Chapter 12 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . Mason (2014) . "'I Disrespectfully Agree': The Differential Effects of Partisan Sorting on Social and Issue Polarization." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 59(1): 128 – 145. Refined Research Statement due at 11:59p.
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Week 15 - 16-18 Apr. <u>Tuesday 16th:</u> <u>Thursday 18:</u>	<u>Multiple and mixed methods</u> Chapter 11 from Dixon, Singleton and Straits (2022) . Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) . "Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict". <i>International Security</i> 33(1): 7– 44.
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Weeks 16-17 - 23 Apr.-3 May <u>Tuesday 23rd:</u> <u>Thursday 25:</u> <u>Friday 26:</u> <u>Thursday 3:</u>	<u>In conclusion</u> Review and Wrap-up Flex Day Research design, extra credit library resources quiz due at 11:59p. Final cumulative exam due at 11:59p.
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References

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