CAS/GRS Course Revision Proposal Form

This form is to be used when proposing a revision of an existing CAS or GRS course.

Once completed, this form should be submitted to Senior Academic Administrator Peter Law (617-353-7243) as a PDF file to pgl@bu.edu.

For further information or assistance, contact Associate Dean Joseph Bizup (617-353-2409; jbizup@bu.edu) about CAS courses or Associate Dean Jeffrey Hughes (617-353-2690; hughes@bu.edu) about GRS courses.

DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM: Pardee School     DATE SUBMITTED: September 19, 2016
CURRENT COURSE NUMBER: GRS IR 702
CURRENT COURSE NAME: Research Methods for International Relations Practitioners

CURRENT 40 WORD COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Provides tools for designing and implementing rigorous research and policy papers. Reviews formulation of research questions and choice of research methods. Introduces methodologies including case study, archival research, and basic quantitative analysis.

CURRENT CROSS-LISTING DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM, if any: n/a
TO BE OFFERED NEXT: Fall 2017
INSTRUCTOR(S): will be taught by various faculty members
DEPARTMENT CONTACT NAME AND POSITION: Elaine Bidianos, Academic Affairs Manager
DEPARTMENT CONTACT EMAIL AND PHONE: elaineb@bu.edu 3-9282

ITEMS PROPOSED FOR REVISION (check all that apply):

- [X] Course Number
- [X] Title
- [X] Short Title
- Credits
- Cross-listing
- [X] 40 Word Description
- Prerequisites
- Divisional Studies Credit
- Other (Explain)

Notes: The “short title” appears in the course inventory and on student transcripts and must be 15 characters maximum including spaces. The “40 word description” appears in the CAS/GRS Bulletin.

PROPOSED REVISIONS: For each item checked above, provide the current information, then the proposed information, then a brief explanation for the proposed change, including the intended impact of the change.
1. Course Number
   a. Current information: GRS IR 702
   b. Proposed information: GRS IR 602
   c. Explanation & impact: Changing this course number will help to create a full introductory sequence of the 6 required MA courses.

2. Course Title
   a. Current information: Research Methods for International Relations Practitioners
   b. Proposed information: Quantitative Analysis for Global Affairs
   c. Explanation & impact: As part of the Pardee School’s review of its MA programs, it has been determined that quantitative methods are an essential component of the education of international relations professionals. This also reflects standard practices among peer and peer-plus schools. While IR 702 has always included a significant statistical component, the course has now shifted away from a greater focus on research design.

3. Short Title
   a. Current information: IR Res Methods
   b. Proposed information: Quant Analysis
   c. Explanation & impact: Short title needs to change due to title change.

4. 40-word Description
   a. Current information: Provides tools for designing and implementing rigorous research and policy papers. Reviews formulation of research questions and choice of research methods. Introduces methodologies including case study, archival research, and basic quantitative analysis.
   b. Proposed information: Introduces international affairs practitioners to statistical reasoning through hands-on practice using real social, political and policy data. Covers key principles and methods of multivariate statistics for public policy analysis. Addresses interactions between quantitative reasoning, international policy analysis, and decision making.
   c. Explanation & impact: Properly reflects refocusing of class to emphasize quantitative methods, as noted in item #2 above.

IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS/PROGRAMS: Will any of these changes have an impact on students pursuing the degree requirements or expectations of other departments, programs, or schools?
Check one: □ Yes   X No
If YES, please identify impacts and attach cognate comment from the appropriate department/program/school.

RESOURCE NEEDS: STAFFING, FACILITIES, AND EQUIPMENT: As a result of the proposed changes, will there be any changes in the staffing, special facilities or equipment needs of the course (e.g. laboratory, library, instructional technology, technical resources, etc)? Check one: ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, explain further and indicate whether currently available staffing, facilities, and equipment are adequate for the proposed course. (NOTE: Approval of proposed revisions does not imply a change in resource commitments on the part of CAS.)

FURTHER INFORMATION THAT MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ORDER FOR THIS PROPOSAL TO BE CONSIDERED:

1. A complete week-by-week SYLLABUS with student learning objectives, readings, and assignments that reflects the proposed changes (see guidelines on “Writing a Syllabus” on the Center for Teaching & Learning website. Be sure that syllabus includes your expectations for academic honesty, with URL for pertinent undergraduate or GRS academic conduct code(s).

2. Cognate comment from chairs or directors of relevant departments and/or programs. Use the form available here. You can consult with Joseph Bizup (CAS) or Jeffrey Hughes (GRS) to determine which departments or programs inside and outside of CAS would be appropriate.

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL: ____________________________________________________________  Date

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs __________________________  Date

Other Department Chair(s) (for cross-listed courses) __________________________  Date

DEAN’S OFFICE CURRICULUM ADMINISTRATOR USE ONLY

CAS/GRS CURRICULUM COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

☐ Approved  Date:_______________
☐ Tabled  Date:_______________
☐ Not Approved  Date:_______________

Divisional Studies Credit:

☐ Endorsed
☐ HU
☐ MCS
☐ NS
☐ SS
☐ Not endorsed
Curriculum Committee Chair Signature and Date

Comments:

PROVISIONAL APPROVAL REQUESTED for Semester/Year ________________

Dean of Arts & Sciences Signature and Date

Comments:

CAS FACULTY: Faculty Meeting Date: ________________ □ Approved □ Not Approved

Curriculum Administrator Signature and Date

Comments:
COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course presents the principal basic and multivariate statistical methods that may be used in the field of international policy analysis, both for conducting statistical analysis and for understanding studies published in advanced journals. The course aims to make students more effective users of statistical tools for analyzing public policy issues and when suggesting solutions. We will also discuss the interaction between quantitative reasoning, international policy analysis, and applied decision making. This course will prepare international affairs practitioners with statistical reasoning and techniques with hands-on practice using real social, political and policy data.

Over the semester, we will apply various statistical tools to evaluate causation in international events and policy. We will do statistical exercises that compare data and groups before and after an international policy change, political event, or experimental condition. We start with basic and descriptive statistics, including the logic of data visualization. We then focus on causal inference and hypothesis testing, eventually applying basic and multivariate regression to policy problems and causal analysis.

While the course material is mathematical in nature, IR 602 should not be seen primarily as a math class. Rather, it focuses on applications of quantitative analysis techniques to issues and problems that Pardee School MA students will encounter in subsequent coursework and in their careers as international relations practitioners. Cases and assignments will address the usefulness and limitations of quantitative analysis of actual policy-relevant datasets.

GRADING

- Weekly assignments (50% of grade)
- Midterm (20% of grade)
- Final take-home exam (30% of grade)
- Piazza participation (10% of grade)
**Weekly assignments and exercises**

Assignment exercises will be due at the start of the class session, and can be revised after the class session, up until a week after the due date, to improve the grade.

**Midterm**

Midterm exam will be held in-class.

**Take-home Final**

I will hand out the take home final one week before the in-class final exam date, and it will be due on Piazza at the time of the university-scheduled final exam.

**Collaboration Policy**

Students may collaborate on the weekly statistics assignments, but you must write your own solutions and code, and also identify any student collaborators on your assignment. Collaboration is not allowed on the midterm or final exams.

**Course Piazza Site & Discussion Board**

We will be using Piazza for class discussion and homework collaboration. Piazza has two functions: one for practical course questions, and the other for facilitating online collaboration. For practical questions, I prefer you first post any inquiries to Piazza before emailing the professor. It is likely that you will get an answer to your question much faster if you pose it to your peers first on piazza, and then I can validate or follow up on any answer when I’m available to do so. Piazza has an anonymous function for this purpose. For homework collaboration, participation will count towards the course participation grade. Find our class page at: [https://piazza.com/classXXXXX](https://piazza.com/classXXXXX). If you have any problems or feedback for the developers, email team@piazza.com.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All class members are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. You are expected to provide citations in papers for all quotations, paraphrases, and ideas taken from any source other than your own original thoughts. Boston University has very strict standards for intellectual
integrity, and punishment for plagiarism is severe, and can include permanent expulsion from the university. For more on the definition of plagiarism and the standards to which you will be held, see the CAS Academic Conduct Code, available at http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/ or the GRS Academic Conduct Code: http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/forms-policies-procedures/academic-discipline-procedures/

READINGS

Required


Recommended or Optional


Other Readings

Other readings will be made available via Blackboard, BU Library E-Reserves, or hyperlinks to external websites.
We will use R in this class, which you can download for free at http://www.r-project.org. R is open source and available on all operating systems. There are many online R tutorials, including “Getting Started With R” and “Try R”.
Course Outline

Week 1
Introduction: Course details, goals, and requirements

Gelman, Andrew. Chapters 1–3 in Quantitative Tour.


Wheelan, Chapters 1-2

Week 2
Causal Inference I

Bailey Chapters Intro, 1, 2
Wheelan chapters 4-5

Week 3
Causal Inference II

Bailey Chapter 3
Cortina, Quantitative Tour, Chapter 21.

Week 4
Descriptive statistics, Data Visualization, and International Policy

Klein and Stockley, Quantitative Tour, Chapters 4–7.

Week 5
Hypothesis Testing I

Wheelan chapters 7-9

Week 6
Hypothesis Testing II

Wheelan Chapter 11
Week 7
Midterm

Week 8 Ordinary Least Squares (OLS)

    Bailey Chapter 5

Week 9
Multivariate Regression I

    Bailey Chapter 7
    Wheelan Chapter 11

Week 10
Multivariate Regression II

    Bailey Chapter 8

Week 11
Research Design, Hypothesis Testing, and Regression

    Bailey Chapter 10, 12

Week 12
Applied International Quantitative Policy Analysis

    Bailey Chapter 16

Take-Home Final Exam