



International Relations Honors Seminar, Fall 2022

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to prepare you to write a senior thesis in the spring. This is the first semester in a two-semester sequence designed to guide you in the development, research, and writing of an original, publishable, honors thesis. Attention is paid in the fall semester to issues of research design, topic selection, theory building and data collection; students will also study appropriate empirical methods.

The focus is on getting you to complete a research thesis. While the class will meet for some lectures, the focus is on students presenting and defending their ideas and individual meetings. By the end of the first semester students are expected to have prepared a detailed description of their research question and the research design they plan to use to answer it.

The thesis proposal is due no later than noon *Friday, November 25th, 2022.*

The first draft of your thesis is due *Friday, February 24th, 2023*

The completed thesis is due on *Friday, March 17th, 2023.*

You will present your findings at the IR and Politics Undergraduate Research Conference on *Friday, April 7th, 2023.*

I intend to set a large number of intermediate deadlines.

Lectures: M 11am-1:30pm @ ARC LL03

Lab: F 12.30 PM - 1.45 PM @ BOBS LL146. Your TA: Felipe Balcázar.

Office Hours: M 2-4pm and by appointment

Text (Optional):

Angrist, Joshua D. and Jörn-Steffen Pischke, *Mastering Metrics: The Path from Cause to Effect*, Princeton University Press 2015.

Stata:

Many people will wish to purchase their own copy of Stata so they can work without relying on the NYU labs. If you purchase you should get Intercooled Stata (the student Stata is not powerful enough for your thesis). Instructions on purchasing Stata are at <http://www.stata.com/order/educational.html/>

Grading:

The course grade is determined as follows:

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| Topic, Literature Review, Research Design | 20% |
| Prospectus and Data Set | 50% |
| Class Participation | 30% |

There are two major projects due towards the end of the semester (specific dates given in class): a compiled dataset that you will be using for your thesis, and a final paper that must include the following:

1. Your puzzle, a discussion of why it is a puzzle, and why the puzzle is important/worthy of study.

2. A thorough, concise and relevant literature review focusing on why existing answers in the literature are unsatisfactory for answering your puzzle.
3. Your answer to the puzzle and how it addresses the gaps in the literature
4. How you will test your answer including any special methodological issues
5. The data that you will be using – with summary statistics and illustrative graphs (we will discuss the data set in greater detail as the course progresses.)

The required data submission will be discussed in class and lab.

In addition, there will be various weekly or bi-weekly assignments designed to move you toward completion of the two items mentioned above. Details will be given in class and posted on the NYU Classes site. Finally, class participation is a crucial part of the course. Your research will be improved by your fellow students' feedback and you owe them the same courtesy.

Approximate Schedule

NOTE: All this is subject to change; at any point we can defer any scheduled topic so as to discuss other issues that have come up relevant to the thesis as needed. You should refer to the NYU CLasses site frequently; schedule specifics will be posted there.

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| Sept 12 | Introduction, the research paper, and choosing a topic Examples of previous theses |
| Sept 19 | <i>Introduction to Data, R and STATA / Bibliography Management and citations: Felipe Balcázar (TA)</i> |
| Sept 26 | No class session; individual advisement on topics |
| Oct 3 | No class session; individual advisement on topics |
| Oct 10 | No classes – Indigenous Peoples Day |
| Oct 14 | Thesis Topic due via email |
| Oct 17 | Topic presentations |
| Oct 24 | Remaining Topic Presentations, The Literature Review |
| Oct 28 | Literature Review due via email |
| Oct 31 | Research Design |
| Nov 7 | No class sessions; individual advisement on research designs |
| Nov 11 | Research Design due via email |
| Nov 14 | Preparing the Prospectus |
| Nov 21 | No class sessions; individual advisement on prospectus |
| Nov 25 | Prospectus and Data Set due via email |
| Nov 28, Dec 5 and 12 | Prospectus presentations and looking ahead |