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Professorship Political Economy

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Methods in Comparative Government: Elections and Electoral Systems

Spring Term 2015

Time and place: Tuesdays, 12noon-1.30pm, building: A5, room: B317

First session: 10th February 2015

Office hours: Tuesday, 3pm-4pm, building: A5, room: B304

The goal of this class is to enable you to empirically test hypotheses using (time-series) cross-sectional observational data. Time-series cross-sectional data is collected by observing one unit at different points in time (e.g., countries' unemployment rates 1945-2010, governments' compositions before and after an election, parties' predicted vote shares in surveys prior to elections, and many more). Substantially, this course focuses on the interactions between voters, parties, and the electoral system.

The first sessions will focus on the methodological challenges of modeling time-series and cross-sectional time-series data. We will discuss theoretical foundations as well as practical implementation in Stata. Also, we will study simulation and data visualization methods to present statistical results more efficiently. The second part of the course will deal with how published research uses the techniques we study to test hypotheses about elections and electoral systems. This includes a discussion of research design and the derivation of hypotheses from theories.

Participants should be familiar with the basics of rational choice theory, OLS regressions and basic functions of STATA (e.g., recoding variables, running OLS regressions, basic graphical commands). No prior knowledge of time-series cross-sectional models is required.

You need to register for this class in advance via the Studierendenportal at <https://portal2.uni-mannheim.de>.

This course is recommended for: Students of Political Science (B.A.) – Aufbaumodul Vergleichende Regierungslehre II (4th semester in Political Science).

ECTS points: 5

All **course materials** can be accessed at <https://portal2.uni-mannheim.de>.

I will send out emails to your university e-mail accounts, so please check them regularly.

Requirements to pass: (*contribution toward your final mark*)

1. Constant and active participation in class: (*25%*)

- It is mandatory to attend classes. You may not attend twice provided you let me know in advance.
- You have to read the assigned literature before coming to class.

2. Assignments: (*We'll discuss these in class, so your participation will hinge on this. Also, if you don't know the Stata commands used in the assignments, this is very likely to become evident in your final paper.*)

- Particularly in the first sessions, you will get Stata assignments that you have to work on before coming to the next session.

3. Development of your own hypothesis: (*This is not marked but very important for your final paper*)

- The hypothesis must imply a linear link function (i.e., no logit or probit models).
- The hypothesis should be quantitatively testable in a cross-sectional (preferably time-series cross-sectional) setting.
- You have to be able to get the data needed to test the hypothesis.
- Submit a short theoretical description and the hypothesis by email.
- Due: 14th June 2015 at midnight (end of term).

4. Short paper on testing your research hypothesis empirically: (*75%*)

- Maximally 5 pages main text (i.e., excluding cover page, graphs, tables and references), double spacing, 12pt font size, 2cm margins (all sides).
- Very briefly summarize the theoretical argument that gives rise to your hypothesis (in one or two paragraphs).
- Bring forward arguments why you test your hypothesis using certain data, methods, and model specifications.
- Present and interpret your empirical results in light of your theory.
- Submit by email on 12th July 2015 at midnight including cover sheet and references.
- Also, submit a hard-copy to the Chair for Political Economy until 18th July 2015 including cover sheet and references, and the *Erklärung für Hausarbeiten*.

Reading List

Session 1 — 10th February — Introduction & Gauss-Markov Assumptions

Wooldridge, Jeffrey M. 2009. *Introductory Econometrics. A Modern Approach*. South-Western: Chapter 5 (and any of the first 9 chapters you think you should revise).

Session 2 — 17th February — Simulations: Presenting Results & Monte Carlo Studies

Tufte, Edward R. 1997. *Visual and Statistical Thinking: Displays of Evidence for Making Decisions*. Cheshire: Graphics Press.

King, G., Tomz, M. and Wittenberg, J. 2000. “Making the most of statistical analyses: Improving interpretation and presentation.” *American journal of political science*: 347–361.

Session 3 — 24th February — Time-Series: Violations of Gauss-Markov Assumptions

Wooldridge (2009): Chapters 10 and 11.

Session 4 — 3rd March — Time-Series: Econometric Models of Time-Series

Wooldridge (2009): Chapters 11 and 12.

Session 5 — 10th March — Panel Data: Basic Concepts

Wooldridge (2009): Chapter 13.

Session 6 — 17th March — Panel Data: Advanced Concepts

Wooldridge (2009): Chapter 14.

Session 7 — 24th March — Panel Data in Empirical Research

Wooldridge (2009): Chapter 15.

Session 8 — 14th April — Representation 1

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane and, Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry. Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1.

Ezrow, Lawrence. 2007. “The variance matters: How party systems represent the preferences of voters.” *Journal of Politics* 69(1): 182–192.

Golder, Matt, and Jacek Stramski. 2010. “Ideological Congruence and Electoral Institutions.” *American Journal of Political Science* 54(1): 90–106.

Session 9 — 21st April — Representation 2

Brambor, Thomas, William Roberts Clark, and Matt Golder. 2006. “Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses.” *Political Analysis* 14(1): 63–82.

Ezrow, Lawrence, Catherine De Vries, Marco Steenbergen, and Erica Edwards. 2011. “Mean Voter Representation and Partisan Constituency Representation: Do Parties Respond to the Mean Voter Position or to Their Supporters?” *Party Politics* 17(3): 275–301.

Session 10 — 28th April — Party Goals

Strøm, Kaare, and Wolfgang C. Müller. 1999. “Political Parties and Hard Choices.” In *Policy, Office, or Votes?. How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*, edited by Wolfgang C. Müller and Kaare Strøm, 1–35. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Martin, Shane. Forthcoming. “Policy, Office and Votes: The Electoral Value of Ministerial Office” *British Journal of Political Science*.

Session 11 — 5th May — Gamson’s Law

Muthoo, Abhinay. 2000. “A non-technical introduction to bargaining theory.” *World Economics* 1(2), 145–166.

Warwick, Paul V. and Druckman, James N. 2006. “The portfolio allocation paradox: An investigation into the nature of a very strong but puzzling relationship.” *European Journal of Political Research* 45(4): 635–665.

Session 12 — 12th May — Pork Barrel Politics

Stratmann, T. and Baur, M. 2002. “Plurality rule, proportional representation, and the German Bundestag: How incentives to pork-barrel differ across electoral systems.” Econstor Working Paper.

Session 13 — 19th May — Women in Parliament

Paxton, P., Hughes, M. M. and Painter, M. A. 2010. “Growth in women’s political representation: A longitudinal exploration of democracy, electoral system and gender quotas.” *European Journal of Political Research* 49(1): 25–52.

Session 14 — 26th May — Summary, Outlook & Evaluation