

EG7. Opinion and political research via web

Subject Information:

Code	EG7	Plan	2014	ECTS	
Type of Subject	Elective	Year		Semester	
Knowledge area:					
Department:					
Virtual Platform	Platform:	Studium.usal.es			
	Access URL:	Studium.usal.es			

Data about the instructor-teacher

Teacher	Robert Pinter	Group / s	
Department	Department of Information and Communication		
Knowledge area	mobile and online research methods, market research, new media, information society		
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Remarks (previous requirements, coordination, other, if any)

Objectives and competencies of the subject (basics, general, transversal, specifics)

Opinion and political research via web course introduces students to the political research practices and the applied online research methods in this field. Internet is a significant part of almost every aspect of political life. It can be researched by reactive and non-reactive methods. Nonreactive data collection methods include data mining, text analysis, social network analysis and analysis of political networks, data visualization, and paradata of online questionnaires. Reactive data collection method includes quantitative methods (collection of data with the use of online questionnaires: political web surveys and voting advice applications) and qualitative methods (e.g. focus groups and in-depth interviews).

At the end of the semester students will have an overview of online research methods in political research and what are the common reactive, non-reactive, quantitative and qualitative solutions.

Programme (Brief Description of modules) and expected learning outcomes

Introduction to political research on the internet

History of political research, research methods before internet and challenges internet means to political research.

Representative sample in the heart of traditional quantitative political research.

Overview of main reactive and non-reactive, quantitative and qualitative online research methods in political research.

Nonreactive data collection in political research:

- data mining,
- text analysis and discourse analysis,
- social network analysis and analysis of political networks,
- data visualization,
- paradata of online questionnaires.

Reactive data collection in political research:

- online questionnaires,
- focus groups and in-depth interviews,
- access panels, online probability panels and Market Research Online Communities (MROCs).

Few key areas in online political research (applied research):

- elections and campaigns
- party and other political websites
- citizens on the Internet, participation and deliberation
- etc.

Expected learning outcome (ELO):

- students will have knowledge on how internet impacted research in political science in the past two decades,
- what are the main online research solutions in this field,

- knowing merits and demerits of these methods and
- be capable to decide when and how to apply the methods for a research of a given political topic.

Methodology

Teaching methodologies include lectures, tutorials seminar and project work.

- Resources:

Bibliography:

Bucy, Erik P – Holbert, R. Lance (2011): *Sourcebook for Political Communication Research: Methods, Measures, and Analytical Techniques*. Taylor & Francis.

Further readings:

Batinic, Bernad – Reips, Ulf-Dietrich – Bosnjak, Michael (2002): *Online social sciences*. Hogrefe & Huber Publishers.

Buttolph, Janet – Johnson, Richard A. - Joslyn, H. T. Reynolds (2001): *Political Science Research Methods*. 4th ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press

Campbell, Donald R. – Campbell, Mary (1995): *The Student's Guide to Doing Research on the Internet*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.

Hewson, Claire – Yule, Peter – Laurent, Diana – Vogel, Carl (2003): *Internet Research Methods: A Practical Guide for the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Jones, Steve (1999): *Doing Internet Research – Critical Issues and Methods for Examining the Net*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Johns, Mark D. – Chen, Shing-Ling – Hall, G. Jon (2004): *Online social research: methods, issues & ethics*. P. Lang.

Klotz, Robert J. (2004): *The Politics of Internet Communication*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Mann, Chris – Stewart, Fiona (2000): *Internet Communication and Qualitative Research: A Handbook for Researching Online*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

McNabb, David E. (2010): *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, 2nd edition. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Miller, Thomas W. – Walkowski, Jeff (2004): *Qualitative research online*. Research Publishers LLC,

Miller, Thomas W. (2005): *Data and Text Mining: A Business Applications Approach*. Pearson Prentice Hall.

Pennings, Paul – Keman, Hans – Kleinnijenhuis, Jan (2006): *Doing Research in Political Science*, Second Edition; Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Theilwall, Michael Arijan (2009): *Introduction to Webometrics: Quantitative Web Research for the Social Sciences*. San Rafael, CA: Morgan & Claypool Publishers.

Online resources:

Evaluation System:

General Considerations:

Evaluation is partly based on participation in seminars, active involvement in project work during the semester and a final written exam at the end of the course.

Evaluation Criteria:

Final grade is based on:

- seminar work (30%)
- project work (30%)
- written exam (40%)

Recommendation for second and following evaluations:

Employment Opportunities (optional)