

Political Science 210, Introduction to Political Behavior Second Paper Assignment

Assignment Handed Out: November 9, 2006

Paper proposals must be posted at pol210.blogspot.com by November 15th, 2006.

Final paper due back: November 30, 2006 (NOTE NEW DEADLINE)

Quantitative Analysis of Survey Data: The Logic of Voting Turnout

We have read many theories of political participation, ranging from those who conceptualize it as a grand prisoner's dilemma, to others who compare it to a collective action problem, finally to those who focus on the role of parties, candidates, and campaigns in encouraging political action.

In this paper, you must analyze one such act of political participation—voting turnout—in the context of the 2004 American presidential election. This is a standard research paper, in that you must propose a thesis, derive testable hypotheses, and test these using evidence.

The evidence you just rely upon is survey data from the 2004 National Election Studies. You must perform a quantitative analysis of voting turnout (using P210-DIDVOTE). In the paper, you must conduct at least one bivariate and one multivariate analysis of your theory. Your multivariate analysis must include at least three variables (one dependent and at least two independent), and at least one IV must be an attitudinal variable (e.g. not just demographics). Your final write up can be no longer than 8 double spaced typed pages including tables, figures, and equations.

You are not limited to using the 2004 NES, and are encouraged to replicate your analysis using the 2000 study as well, but this is not required.

Papers will be evaluated according to creativity, organization, and grammar and spelling. A well organized, carefully written paper is better than a poorly organized but very creative paper. Papers will also be credited insofar as they can include citations to appropriate readings from the course.

All students must post their paper proposals at <http://pol210.blogspot.com>. Your proposal must include a basic statement of your thesis and what variables you will use to address this question. You must include your name with your posting.

Your final write up must include the following components in your paper:

- 1) An introductory section where you specify the concepts and theories that you are going to test. This will be evaluated according to the standards for good concepts and theories described in the readings, as well as reference to other materials in the class that deal with political participation.
- 2) You must include a paragraph which describes the specific operationalizations that you have chosen. Make sure you include specific hypotheses for your dependent and independent variables. You must make specific, directional claims about these relationships.
- 3) You must present at least one TWO-WAY (crosstabular, correlation or difference of means) relationship and interpret this relationship.
- 4) You must present one MULTIVARIATE analysis with at least three variables, one dependent and two independent variables. You must interpret the effects for at least TWO of the independent variables. Are your hypotheses confirmed or disconfirmed?
- 5) Finally, in your conclusion, you should consider what was not included, alternative models, etc. If you compare the 2000 and 2004 NES, what differences did you find between the two years and what might account for these?